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“EXCELSIOR”

OR THE REALMS OF

POESIE

BY ALASTOR



LONDON

WILLIAM PICKERING

1852

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“ ‘ TRY not the Pass!’ the old man said ;
‘ Dark lowers the tempest overhead,
The roaring torrent is deep and wide !’
And loud that clarion voice replied
‘ Excelsior ! ’ ” *Long fellow.*

THE world’s right alchemy reveals no blank,
Its poets turning meanest things to gold,
Still culling from the loftiest lowliest rank
Metal more potable than books foretold ;
Though bullion dearer to the mass may be,
Earth’s truest gold is Nature’s poetry.
Kent.



TO CAPTAIN COLTHURST,
AND TO THAT BELOVED CIRCLE
WHOSE KINDNESS AND INTERCOURSE FOSTERED THESE
EARLY BUDS OF FANCY,
ARE THEY AFFECTIONATELY AND GRATEFULLY
INSCRIBED BY
THE AUTHOR.



NOTICE.

SINCE completing this enlarged and revised edition for the Public, I have seen an attack, (not a critique), in the “Illustrated London News,” upon the small private edition.

I will only in the present instance point the reader to the end of the volume, for the opinions of men whose broad Sun-like names shine this dim Sulphur-drop of spleen out of sight.

A.



PREFACE.

MANY of these early blossoms of thought, springing from a favourite theme, were first culled by the Author for the acceptance of a few beloved friends, but were afterwards greatly augmented, and re-arranged for presentation to the world ; and though their petals may be faulty or but half unfolded, let not the golden thread of love which binds them together be overlooked.

A private edition has already been circulated, therefore I have been unwilling to alter materially the body of the work, but have added a supplement, to which of course the dedication and opinions do not extend, as I have there given my own opinions freely, which necessarily may be

questioned by many. As some of the Chiefs of Literature have thought it worth perusal and approval,—I apologise not for presenting it to the public, hoping, yea believing, as I do, that the spirit is good, and earnest, and thus may sow some few seeds of good in the souls of my fellow brothers.

I say nothing here in defence of the loose form of the book ; as the reader advances he will find it explain itself.

Should there be anything good in it, that, without fail, will be appreciated. If there be not, then who will more gladly see it dashed to the earth than, *Alasfor?*

Killarney, Sept. 1851.



NOTE.

LED by an exquisite notice of Longfellow's poems by Gilfillan, I have since writing "Excelsior" procured and devoured the works of the author of such critique.—They who would wish to obtain a broad, massive view of the Literary history and spirit of the past half-century and present time, should forthwith procure the works of this Giant-mind. There also they will see full exhaustive reviews, of many of the great men whom I have so briefly sketched.

The two "Galleries of Literary Portraits" form a waving forest of grand imagery; wide information; liberal and just criticism; philosophical acumen, and generous enthusiasm.

No praise of mine could touch the pale of that awful Sinai, whose grand imagery hangs over and folds around it, even as that dread mountain when it shook with the thunder and lightnings of the immediate Godhead; I allude to those grand outpourings of a majestic soul to the Eternal, whose crystal floods are gathered within his last great work "The Bards of the Bible." Still it is as necessary, as delightful, to vent a few words of gratitude to its Author. It is a tome let down from the spirit-world; it is an

altar raised to the great I AM, piled with golden thoughts, and flame-like utterances. Mountain range after range of vast and glowing thought stretch away into the holy land of Heaven, and over all gradually spreads the Night-like majesty of Bible-wisdom till its religious firmament is fanded with the brilliant stars of revelation, to which Gilfillan's soul is as the telescope, bringing whole hidden galaxies to view.

Here is the rapt soul of a latter-day Hebrew Poet, commenting upon his brothers of old. He speaks in fire and thunder; he writes, he feels; he pities; yea, he creates, like a God!—but he aspires; loves,—and sorrows over human miseries as a Man!—He is a religious enthusiast without intolerance; a mourner over human frailty,—not a satirist; a bold minister of the living God,—and a manly spiritual leader of the young minds of the present sceptical Era; nor can his influence be unfelt upon his age.

As the dead Raffael lay glorified beneath his magnificent picture of “The Transfiguration,” so may Gilfillan lie with greater glory, and more Godlike features, beneath the shadow of this grand Temple he has raised to the mighty God whom he loves as a child, but worships like a Seraph.

Ye who have hung with delight o’er the pages of that noble work! Have I spoken too warmly in its praises? I have at least paid my own soul’s debt of gratitude to its beloved Author!

A.



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THE POET.

WHEN the Poet, calm and faintly,
Chants his solemn midnight theme,
Listen to his notes, which faintly
Waft from antenatal dream.

Golden thoughts in starry clusters,
Swell and glitter through his mind,
When his God-like powers he musters,
To refine and raise his kind.

Darts through Heaven his rapier spirit,
Pales its light before God's throne ;
And with Love alone to steer it,
Wings its flight through realms unknown.

Cleaves it now the morn's bright portals,
Floats on Sunset's golden cars ;—
Mingles next with bright Immortals
As it greets the banded stars.

Mourns he now that Sin and Sorrow
Trail their slime o'er flowers of Earth,
But predicts the bright to-morrow
Dawning o'er its second birth.

(When Hate's serpent-head is crush'd
'Neath the mighty heel of Love,

*And again with victory flush'd
O'er it broods the mystic dove !)*

*Cradled 'tween the plumes of Science
Skims he now the fields of Space,
Hope his pilot,—hot defiance
Hurls at Custom's anger'd face.*

*Who is he loves not the Poet,
Who derides God's teacher-child?
Up and to the Nations show it !
Lift their execrations wild.*

*They will tell thee that thou liest,
For that ever bold and true
Were the bards whom thou decriest,
And on wings of glory flew !*

*Heaven and Earth seem far asunder
Matter knows not Spirit's form,
Yet God's voice speaks not in thunder,
Bursts not through the folds of Storm !*

*But as lightning Inspiration
Cleaves it first the Poet's soul ;
Then with musical gyration
Out the mystic numbers roll.*

*Realms of spirit and of matter
Now appear dissever'd wide,
But the Poet yet shall scatter
Waves of Ignorance that divide !*

*Up ! then burning Orbs of Song,
O'er soul-darkness pour your light !
Stream dark caves of Guilt among,
Gild the palace-domes of Right !*



“ EXCELSIOR,”
OR THE REALMS OF POESIE.

CHAPTER I.

Invocation.



H thou whose crystal shrine o'erroofs man's loftiest hopes and aspirations ! who bearest the golden keys of nature's mysteries and the majestic designs of nature's God ! whose snowy feet purify and exalt the beauteous earth o'er which they so lightfomely bound, but whose finger is ever spired to the star-lamped realms of Heaven ! In whose deep soul all beauties and sublimities are casketed, and who art the Guardian Angel of man's holiest impulses and meditations ! Thee, O Poesie, do I rapturously hail ! Thee have I ever loved ! far too wildly for mere worldly prosperity ! —at thy feet have I in silence cast those richest offerings—however poor—my youthful days, heart, and hopes ;—whose fragrance shall yet teem from the lips of thy golden censer !

“ Reflected in thy deep azure eyes have I seen the glories of Time unfolded, and caught far starry glimpses of Eternity and Infinity !

“ From childhood thou hast been my heart’s dearest friend : thou alone hast ever sympathised with, softened and alleviated my sorrows,—for when the dense gloom of the night of Misanthropy, fell darkly over the lovely land of Hope,—did not thy mild face, my bright mental moon break through the black clouds and pour a softened beauty o’er my onward path ? with flowers did’st thou not enwreath the arrows of fierce thought, and stinging scepticism, which had else pierced and paralyzed this wild brain ? hast thou not been to me as the dearest, most fostering mother ; the most darling sister ; and wilt thou not be the bright, beautiful and spiritual bride of my aspiring soul ? In thy pearly arms would I breathe my last ; thy holy breath shall waft my spirit’s skiff o’er the azure depths of Infinity, to the golden isles of Heaven, nor wilt thou disdain to strew thy fragrant blossoms o’er the tomb of this my worn out mortal ark, when I float away from the dark heaving sea of mortal life—into the sunny air-realms of the spiritual, for thou hast told me that the grave is but the shady avenue to the glowing land of mysteries.

“ And shall I, because the dark spirit Mammon now flaunts his ebon standard over the Nations,—basely fear to raise thy own, far above on the mountain-peaks of Hope and Love ? Shall I lest cold selfish souls brand me with the name of Enthusiast or Maniac,—which I should glory in from THEIR hands,—basely forgetting thy favours, choke the burning words of praise mantling to my lips ?

“ No ! grant me but a single ray of thy inspiration, and min-

gled with my own fire I will once again light up thy neglected shrine, that *youthful* souls at least seeing it, may take heart, fall before—and humbly lay their offerings upon it !”

Thus thought the wandering, enthusiastic Julian, after leaving a lovely and imaginative circle of chance-made friends, who appeared to him as a rich tuft of forest flowers, for they loved not the hot, dusty, and garish paths of the World, but bloomed 'neath the cool shady coverts of maternal Nature ; their meek eyes raised with love and gladness through the lattices of the green fresh foliage overhead to the deep blue realms of heaven. Oh may never one of them be transplanted into the dry and formal parterres of the world !

Julian had ever been eagerly longing and seeking for some distant nebula of heart-cheering friends, and now after many weary days had their light dawned suddenly over his path, and full well did he know how to value and appreciate the mild lustre of their unworldly friendship.

He had exchanged a few of his silver gossamer webs of fancy, for a more than equivalent value of their golden threads of religion and purity, which he gladly entwined around his heart. But chiefly the snowy hand of Love had led him to their spotless family altar, where the still small voice of earnestness spoke deeper meanings to his listening soul, than all the guffy harangues of POPULAR Preachers !

He saw here faith and good works go hand in hand, and like Simeon of old when he had found what he had long been seeking, he likewise felt ready to depart in peace, for that pure fragrant religion, like a lovely orange-tree, clustered with fragrant flowers and golden-globed fruit, which he had long searched for in vain,

flood now before him. Right royally, did he observe, that this differed from the so-called religion he had met with too often in the World—which he knew to be but glaring tulip-like *Profession*, all outward gaudy show, but no perfume arising from its black heart.

Deeply was his soul relieved, and deeply did he thank God for this unexpected blessing.

Let us recall his wandering thoughts. He thus was pouring out his gratitude to his Goddess Poesie, nor could there be any great harm in his adoration, for she lifted him high above many of the dark pitfalls of youth, as also above the foul sepulchres of Avarice, and Selfishness, and kept his eyes fixed on the sky above where her radiant face beamed forth star-like, where also the other orbs of revelation came faltering gradually in. Poesie being nearest and dearest to the young mental orb, is to it a luminary of the first magnitude, and those who first see her dazzling light through the twilight of their minds, as the night of wisdom grows deeper and more holy, observe her loftier and more distant sisters appearing one by one, till at last their souls are filled with starry thoughts and revelations. Many souls can only descry her loftier but sterner sister—Religion, when seen reflected in the clear mirrors of her loving eyes !

And as his imaginative friends, (fearing Julian might comet-like soon wheel off into his aphelion and be no more seen of them) had besought him to gather a few flowers of thought from his favourite theme as a memento of once happy converse—he at length assented and clapping spurs to his fancy proceeded thus.

Definition of Poesie.

POESIE is the lightning chain 'twixt Earth and Heaven :— the ethereal ladder on which angelic thoughts of Aspiration ascend from man to his God ; and of Inspiration descending from God to his earthly children. It elevates the real into the ideal, and thus eternizes fleeting Time-shadows ; annihilates the cold false and dead laws of materialism,—by dissolving the hard Real into the plastic vapour of Imagination :—and points the hidden eternal spirit or meaning couched beneath evanescent material forms and operations, which are but the outer alphabet to be learned by the youthful soul of man. It is the telescope piercing into the depths of the Infinite ; and the microscope revealing the wondrous beauty and God-given majesty of the Finite.

She darts through the Universe ; peeps through the golden gates of Heaven ; peers lovingly and longingly into the secrets of all other worlds, and the glories and mysteries of this ; flits round the lovely stars as inquisitive moths do round the lights of evening, and bridges the Infinite from world to world, and from galaxy to galaxy with her flowery festoons of Imagination.

She wears at her girdle the golden keys of Time, Space and Eternity, at whose enchanted touch those majestic gates fly back and reveal their wondrous secrets ; and her eyes are the mirrors which reflect the most lofty and starreal mysteries !

She is God's own beloved handmaid and faithful servitor, (for he accepted her services in the revealing of his holy Word and

Will to mankind), and her sublimest and loftiest theme is Religion.

Language is merely her vehicle,—the raft which floats her noble promptings and impulses (issuing from her votaries to the whole human family), through the portals of Sound and deposits their golden freight in the Halls of Mind. Or language, we may say, is but the outer and symbolic garment of the idea, which idea, is floated into and represented to the eye of the mind, through the aid of its imagery—for all language is based upon the imagery of the outward or material Universe. Now, Poesie being lovely and noble in herself, disdains to present herself to the gaze of the Mind in aught but a lovely euphonius, sound-vesture, but this she casts off when she has been received within the innermost Chambers of Thought, and stands revealed as naked Truth.

In fine, every soul-prompting, if pure, lovely, or sublime, is Poesie! everything which elevates or ennobles man's soul, and buoys it up nearer Heaven, is Poesie in one or other of her Protean shapes. But mere rhyme is NOT; and ideas though clad in the most lovely or glittering vesture of words, and wafted on clouds of the richest melody, are not NECESSARILY poetry; for these are but as the glossy outward appearance of the shell, and may enclose but a rotten kernel, or may resemble, perchance those richly-sculptured marble sepulchres which contain notwithstanding all this, but rotten bones.

No! but when a lovely shell encloses a sound delicious kernel, then is Poetry a divine strengthening gift to the human mind—and then shall that kernel spring up and bear the fruit of noble thoughts and actions an hundredfold.

We have had gorgeous and dazzling poetical language and

imagery, wafted on the pinions of the most voluptuous melody, from such as the short-sighted world often calls, "Great Poets," who were little better oftentimes than demons disguised in flesh.

Many think poetry to be the mere melody-wheel'd, fairy car, in which lovely thoughts, and rich imagery, are carried pleasureably into the mind.—We maintain that it should be the fiery-winged chariot with thunderous wheels, tearing up the fallow mental fields through which it cleaves, and strewing the golden grain of truth into the deep delved furrows, so that the once barren soil should wave richly with the ripened ears of noble actions.

That Poetry is alone true, grand, and sublime, which takes man from his worm-like crawling in the dust, and plumes his soul with angel-wings of aspiration, which shall soar upwards, and upwards, till they rest on the glorious foot-stool of God.





CHAPTER II.

Vague Introduction to Friends, and to following Notices.

THUS far Julian proceeded in his written fancies, when Evening brought, in her glittering star-gemmed hands, as the most welcome gift she could offer, the hour of meeting his friends.

He departed, and, as he neared their blessed mansion, and walked up the thickly-wooded avenue, listening with rapture to the melodious breath of the winds filling its natural aisles of shade,—the stars, those silver urns of heaven, poured down their crystal streams of light through the dark fibrous branches of the winter trees, seeming a delightful prelude to the heaven within.

The accustomed sound of music hung like rich clouds of fragrance over the abode, made more sweet by the pure warm soul he knew was mingled with it, and floating on its alternately rising pinions, or softly declining cadences.

The hollow knock brought the dear face of the faithful old servitor to the door, and introduced him with smiles of welcome to this lately-found home of his heart.

Once more his soul dilated when he perceived the gloomy Past, (standing like a dark, hateful spectre, by the side of the smiling and angelic-eyed Present—touched by her winning looks,) at last slope unwillingly away to the engulphing caves of Oblivion.

Musical and Poetical now threw their interwoven branches over him ; the holy family prayer again ascended like a silvery cloud to Heaven ; and lo ! now Genius and Beauty rewarded him with cheering smiles as they bent their kind eyes over his hastily-written scroll.

The word of parting was once more exchanged, but now it sounded not so drear and doleful, for the haunting spectre of the past had left him, and his soul also acknowledged the power wherewith praise and appreciation from pure feminine lips are endowed.

Again the hospitable door was closed gently behind him, but as he raised his eyes to heaven, and gazed upon the glorious stars (who had ever appeared to him as meek-eyed sisters), and the blessed silvery moon, whose united grandeur and lofty beauty had first inspired his soul with intense poetic longings ; he felt that he yet might share some small fragment of their bright immortality.

Arrived at his adopted lake-side home, reclining by his cheerful turf fire, and gazing into the silver'd face of the beauteous Night, the umbrous Mountains standing like huge penitent giants, softened down and dimly silvered by the lovely presence of their “ fayre ladye,” the Moon, he poured forth the following molten fancies, alternately turgid or calm-flowing, as the shadows of his favourite poets passed spirit-like in solemn review o’er the moon-like disc of his mind.



CHAPTER III.

The Four Quarters of the Poetic World.

SHAKESPEARE—represents the World of Man in all its motley phases, and possesses the key of the human museum.

2. *Spenser, Wordsworth, Thomson.*—These three represent the World of Nature. The first, in its romantic garb ; the second, in its philosophical ; and the last, in its naked beauty, except as shrouded in the encircling misty folds of Divine Providence.

3. *Dante, Milton, Pollok.*—These three represent the Religious World, rising like ethereal sun-lit clouds above the first two classes, inasmuch as they have painted in undying colours the religious beliefs, aspirations, and thoughts of their day, heightened by their own lofty conceptions.

They stood before the world as expounders and developers of Revelation, and openers of alternately dismal or enchanting vistas, through the otherwise dark, impenetrable, and mysterious forests of Time and Eternity.

4. *Goethe, Shelley, Byron.*—And now, lastly, we take as representatives of the sceptical portion of the World of Man these three great poets, who represent the heart of Man as deeply influenced by, but not as enlightened worshippers at, the last mentioned but greatest shrine. They felt deeply the present littleness, but great future capabilities of man, and the majestic beauty and mystery of Nature.

The inherently dazzling and heated conceptions of their minds (heated by the intense beams of deep and over-ardent thought) would but indistinctly allow the distant but far mightier rays of the one great Sun of Truth to pass into, and give GENIAL heat, as well as light to their dependent spheres (though perhaps from a false idea of self-emanating light, they did not, or would not, acknowledge such dependence).

Perchance, being but planets, they ignorantly persuaded themselves they were suns; nor saw they that they shone with a borrowed, though unacknowledged, light! They thought themselves light-particles of the Great Positive Mind!

Acting too much on this false supposition, they are left to the gaze of the world as shattered, or rather as half-developed statues;—as ideal images of Chaos before the one mighty forming Spirit moved o'er and threw the mantle of order and beauty upon its dismal bulk; and like it they wear an unformed, darkly clouded, and wretched aspect, all being devoured by mental doubts and torturing scepticism.

The Spirit of God had not moved over the face of *their* dark waters:—the true Sun of Life had never soared above and brightly gilded their formless mental mountains and gloomy oceans, nor had its kindly warmth ever called forth its teeming creation of

lifelily, joyous, and exulting thoughts. The broad calm enduring sunlight of Revelation was discarded for the fitful flash of incessant meteors.

Yet ere Time merges in Eternity shall one such chaotic mind gradually rise from its black depths of self-pride and deadly torpor, till the sun of Life and Divinity, sailing high over and darting life and heat through its former half-stagnant depths, shall call forth for the enlightenment of mankind a new and glorious creation, a harvest of lofty thoughts founded upon and springing from the noble truths and promptings of the Material Universe, and which shall stamp deeply on the soul of man the as yet only half-developed truth—that mind, and not matter, is the foundation-stone of Nature, and shall prove that there is a deeper meaning and majesty about her than has yet been discovered.

That thou wilt soon throw such a soul into the world is the heartfelt and earnest prayer, O ! Heavenly Father, of all thy expectant and aspiring children ! We know thou wilt not leave us in the darkness of Ignorance if we earnestly supplicate thee for wisdom, and prepare our souls by a long course of love and humility for its proper reception. Nor shall, we hope, the lesson of Solomon's fall be forgotten or unheeded.

Flowers of truth, of the most gorgeous hues and of the richest fragrance, cluster on the Banks of Eternity and the Spirit Realms :—but he who would gather them whilst clothed with the folds of humanity, must cross the streams of Time by that rainbow Arch of Ideality, whose warders and ministers are Humility, Universal Love, and the mother of both—Religion ; any of whom being unknown will bar and prevent his passage to them :—for never shall he bring and flaunt their blossoms on this

side the grave merely to flatter his self-pride,—never shall they be gathered for the mere admiration of mortals, or except for some nobly useful end. Their petals would only be torn by the disdainful hands of Pride, when they had ceased to charm by their novelty !

Many are loudly calling for a further divine revelation. Have they made proper use of the first ? Have they imbedded its noble maxims in their innermost souls ? When this is done, and they show themselves worthy of future knowledge, then God will not be backward in affording it !





CHAPTER IV.

HAVING received encouragement from his friends, after reading to them by request, when assembled in solemn conclave, the preceding slight sketch, he proceeded thus :—

A GLANCE AT JULIAN'S FAVOURITE POETS.

The illustrious contemporary Trio, and best-beloved Poet-friends of our Youth—Byron, Keats, and Shelley.

Ye whom we have loved more than brothers, with a boundless and, perchance, too rash and unwise love, now will we delightedly offer this small, but heartfelt tribute of gratitude to your manes ! May that God, whom ye in your spiritual states must now have learned to venerate more highly, give us strength to do you justice, and gather wisdom from a long contemplation of your greatness, beauties, and, we must sorrowfully add,—failings !

We shall first find three noble natural symbols to convey strongly our estimate of their several great phases of mind.

Byron is a semblance of the Sun in his meridian splendour—

fierce, wild, and confuming. His mind was one that dazzled and bewildered the mid-day traveller of the paths of life ; forced him to lie down despondingly in his weakness by the wayside ; then irritated him with its burning and feverish beams ; and when he was able to rise, lo ! the gloom of night spread dismally around him.

Keats resembles the Moon with all its delicious silverings of light and shade, throwing a heavenly light over every valley, mountain, stream, and forest, over which its faintly beams so lovingly fell ; clothing Nature with a vesture of the loftiest classical beauty, and throwing a gleam of splendour into the dark caves of mind, and over the shattered mountains of the religious creeds, aspirations, and lore of the otherwise dim Past.

Shelley resembles the dim mysterious starlight, where, through the dark-blue boundless dome of the sky, his thoughts gleam silently forth, filling its majestic circle with twinkling starry lights, dim only from their distance and loftiness. Still they are grand revelations of the mighty magnificence and boundlessness of the Temple of Nature.

Having thus expressed, by a link of bold natural similes, the different characteristics of each, we will now break the link, and treat themselves, their works, and their influence, individually.

BYRON.—The life of this Titanic poet was in itself a most instructive drama, and he was the real living hero of it.

The failings, broken aspirations, and warning example of the hero of any great ideal drama could never have produced so deep and forcible an effect on the mind of man ; for the truths con-

veyed under the form of any such fictitious hero would only have affected sensitive and thoughtful minds.

But the veritable life of a great and renowned living man appeals boldly to the minds of all, and Byron's real and living example "was known and seen of all men."

They, who, having the power, will not instruct and elevate the world by inculcating good principles through the medium of their works and actions, inform it oftentimes more effectually by their erring lives, which nearly ever are darkened by that black forest which springs from the seeds of whatever sin they themselves have sown and fostered.

Every loftily-framed mind must have some grand faith or belief still loftier than itself to look up to, which generates Hope, (and how dark and miserable is man without her cheering beams!) and till such belief has taken deep root, life is but a restless feverish dream, and one wide desert of misery, to escape from which an ocean of crime and excess is usually formed wherein to engulf the galling shackles of thought.

Those who wish to take a fair estimate of Byron must not forget the force of his naturally implanted passions, nor the disappointments, the deep sorrows and vexations, which added fuel to, and then set them ablaze.

His early insulted lameness, (and insulted by a parent too!); the bad training of his fickle-minded and passionate mother; no father to give him kind and wholesome advice, or set a good example; his early passionate love disappointed; his own youthful imprudence, and the temptations to which his rank subjected him; the neglect that bitterly galled his proud soul on first taking his seat amongst his Peers; and, added to these, the

reptile sting of Jeffrey when he first confidently offered his youthful effusions to the public, followed by the overpowering and unwise torrent of public praise when he hurled wildly back his scorn and indignation ; surely these facts ought to plead eloquently for so sensitive a mind, and all will now generously admit they were calculated to frost the noblest buds of promise as they were just unfolding.

Let the sneer of contempt be Jeffrey's well-earned tribute, whenever the delinquences of poor Byron are mentioned, in memory of that frosty, and calmly sarcastic critique on the first simple spring flowers of the passionate young Poet, which caused him to tear up the lovely budding bulbs of Fancy and Imagination, to transplant the richly hued but deadly nightshade flowers of poisonous Passions !

Wondrous was Byron's command of powerful and expressive language, and grand or delicate imagery ; and had he not met with so much to disgust him with life and his fellow-men, they would have been devoted to the service of far higher and purer shrines than those of the base Passions and Misanthropy !

The fierce hatred of cant and *seeming* goodness was at least a noble feature, and showed a genuine nobility and truthfulness of soul !

He sails through the firmament of time as a huge black cloud toiling heavily through its pilgrimage, and dropping at intervals large drops of thunder rain, or darting from its bosom annihilating bolts of forked lightning, scathing and scorching the spots on which they fall : and oh ! what a relief to the world it brooded darkly over, when, arrived at the horizon's edge and the gates of evening, the sun it had obscured during most of its day's journey

shot forth its expiring splendour, and steeped that cloud's previous black skirts in dazzling gold and crimson !

The sunlight silvered only his morning of life (which dawned in Caledonia), and cast its golden beams over its evening, which faded away in the glorious land of Greece.

Let not any canting and inflated Pharisee waste his breath in censuring poor Byron, but let him rather take heed from his example to go and do better, as he will otherwise only recall to memory that ancient brother of his, who thanked God "that he was not as other men were * * * * nor even as this publican" !

We will here add, that a pure and elevated Byron is now called for eagerly by the world ; one who has an equal hatred of the cant and false profession which are now gnawing away the roots of all that is noble, manly, or true, and who, whilst branding craft, selfishness, and vice, shall do it, not for the purpose of raising his own fame, but to purify and exalt his fellow-men !

KEATS.—Beloved Keats ! Thou graceful and beauteous fawn, that camest to drink and refresh thyself at the cool streams of Poesy, and there received the venomous arrow of the crouching assassin ; oh ! how our heart yearns to meet thee in that "better land," which we feel assured thou art now roaming, to pour our streams of gratitude in thine ear, and to inform thee how thousands have deprecated and despised the wretch who inflicted thy death wound !

Since first our soul dilated over thy chaste and lovely pages, we have never ceased to esteem thee as the best-loved friend of our heart. Surely if there be communion of souls hereafter, we shall yet meet and rove the Elysian fields together !

The poetry of Keats is one mass of glittering, or soft gleaming ideas, enveloped in clouds of golden hazy romance. His quaint style of language has a surprisingly expressive power, and by its aid every image is clearly and boldly chiselled out. Originality of thought, style, and expression was never more strongly evidenced by the works of any poet, modern or ancient.

Like some errant streamlet threading the wild forest maze, gurgling and gushing, or idly dreaming along, through o'erarching banks banner'd with ferns, eyed with dancing flowers, fringed with feathery grasses and succulent herbage;—now reflecting in its dancing waves the inpeeping sky-fragments, anon calmly gliding beneath and glazing, the cloistral gloom of the matted arborage o'erhanging its blackened depths, and at length issuing joyously into the sunny, bleating pastures, reflecting the infinite depths of the azure heavens—even so does the gratefully refreshing stream of his poetry flow, and fill with fresh beauty every mind which opens its floodgates for its entrance.

In his “Endymion,” and in the splendid fragment of “Hyperion,” he has proved with what a warm spirit he loved and respected the beliefs and lore of the classic past; and through them he has familiarised the present age with their before fading beauties, putting us forcibly in mind of Schiller’s noble appeal in his manly poem “The Gods of Greece.”

All who are enamoured with beauty, love, or purity of heart, we feel assured, will find in Keats a beloved companion and brother.

SHELLEY.—His glorious mind was a golden censer, swung in the giant-hands of Imagination, who scattered its incense, and

filled with its luscious perfume the lofty dome of the dark blue sky, when Evening had lighted up the stupendous Temple of Nature with its silver lamps, the stars.

All that is lovely and delicate, all that is strange or mysterious, all that is magnificent or sublime in nature, this poet seems to have known, loved, and idealized.

All the most ennobling and kindly feelings that human nature has implanted in it, springing from natural and not revealed religion, Shelley had o'erflowing his own loving heart; his delicate perception of the faintest developed natural beauties, and his command of graphic and elegant language in which to express them, is miraculous.

His soul appears as though it were formed of the most fine and delicate haze, which rose by virtue of its ethereal lightness through the heights, and floated through the depths of space and the universe, back to its possessor, who then gave in his poetry flight snatches of spherul melody, and mystic hints whispered by the Natural Spirit of the Universe.

In the silver meshes of his poetry are clustered thoughts, delicate as harebells, lofty as the stars, beauteous as moonlit clouds, and profuse as the forest flowers of Spring.

He is the Apostle of Nature; he sings not of religion—that was not the province allotted him; but the faculties given him to exalt nature, and noble feelings in the eyes of his fellow-men, which were becoming every day more and more overlooked, he used nobly and powerfully.

Shelley, perchance unconsciously, by his high ideal of Nature, and the apparent design and deep meaning dwelling within her, which, none more than he truly felt or saw, raised as it were the

pyramid-bafe of a grand religion, thoroughly grounded upon, and permeated with, the Spirit of Nature ; but the grand throne of God he placed not upon it as the finishing ftroke,—this he did *not* do, we admit,—for the night of Death fell, ere his lamp of Faith was lit for the work.

He who takes Shelley's grand and ennobling ideas of his Mother Nature, as the foundation of his fpiritual developement, and ufes fimilarly grand ideas to explain and beautify fpiritual or divine truths, will raife for himfelf a temple whose foundations fhall be firmly grounded in the heart of Nature, and whose dome and golden crofs fhall pierce the heavens.

As to the bitter abufe of Shelley by many, we can only fay, that thofe who read him with a wifh to be inftructed, and a deep difcerning eye, will never after a careful perufal of his glorious works have caufe to regret it, or feel, unlefs moft fceptical and irreligious by nature, one whit the lefs veneration for religion ;—but, on the contrary, will feel greater reverence to God and his mighty power and goodnefs !

We fay nought to fuperficial and prejudiced readers, who dart over the furface, and only take notice of the few dead or un-wholefome ideas which may be found floating thereon, and who then blazon their petty difcovery to the world ; forgetting that their own hearts, which have not been laid bare to the world, like Shelley's, may, perchance, be choked up with putrid fhools of evil defires, refembling the Red Sea, when the plague of locufts was driven into it !

It refts with the reader's own mind, whether he turns what he reads to a good or bad account. If it has a natural or acquired fceptical turn, then Shelley's is at leaft the loftieft fort

of doubt, where, though the divinity of the revealer of the Christian doctrines is doubted, His noble maxims of love and peace to all men are maintained, and estimated deeply !

Of course we except "Queen Mab," which was but a youthful composition, and which he himself afterwards deprecated—striving to prevent its publication. An early acquaintance with the sceptical French school of writers, and a hatred to the petty tyranny of Opinion and Custom, generated the seeds which sprang up and produced this rash and puerile work, the glaring faults of which, under such circumstances, no noble mind will remember against his embittered youth !

We boldly assert, that if Shelley was not a professor of the Christian faith, he was a most Christian-like man in heart, whose example in such light it would be well for many loudly professing Christians, who have cast their pharisaical eye and loud abuse upon his memory, to follow.

As for his heresies—"he who is perfect, let him cast the first stone." It is only our all-perfect and mighty God that can do that, and to his loving-kindness and mercy we leave poor Shelley, with prayers for an exercise of those his mightiest attributes.

God saw fit to take him from us, we may say almost in the infancy of his great mind—for we firmly believe that never did a grander, more highly and delicately imaginative, or more loving spirit fall into this World, and become cooped in its clay.

We beseech thee, O God ! to give the true spirit of discernment to all thy earthly children, and especially to those who roam the loftiest realms of mind !

These sketches Julian took and read as usual to his friends,

when a sharp conflict arose upon the merits of Shelley: the fight grew hot and fierce, but was at length decided by each army drawing off its forces. He then continued his notices as follows:—

TENNYSON.—Not exactly cypresses, but a wreath of weeping willow, should encircle his name. He is enamoured with ideal beauty and purity of soul, and he sings the praises of holy and exalted friendship more than the warmer passion of Love. He may be characterized as an elevated philosopher with a poet's expression, which a delicate perception of the beautiful and true has given him.

His harp is not strung with strings whose wild loud notes shall first awaken, and then petrify the snoring World, but with filken, silvery, gossamer chords, whose fairy melody is heard only by the delicate spiritual ear.

Yet keeps he perhaps too close to the shores of Time, and dares not, or will not, sail the mighty oceans of mind, and bring us like golden fruit from beyond their distant shores, sublime and inspiring ideas of Futurity. He keeps his wings too closely furled, when we consider his poetical powers!

May Time give him courage and bear him happiness;—root up the willow which points, with its thousand drooping and nerveless arms, to the cold EARTH, and transplant the Poplar which ever points, with its one firm giant finger, to the bright, glorious, and joy-inspiring HEAVENS!

BAILEY.—This is, perhaps, the greatest poet of the present generation, inasmuch, as in his “Festus,” he has endeavoured

to display the boundless aspirations, thoughts, and failings of a young enthusiastic spirit, deeply imbued with a love of Nature, man, and God, yet wanting the greatest and most comforting doctrine of Faith, from lack of which spring all the uncurbed and boundless, but broken, aspirations of youth, and the failings and excesses attendant thereon.

He has nobly dared to do all this, and the world has not let him go unrewarded.

His last work, "The Angel World," shows, however, an increase of faith and humility, consequent upon his having exhausted the more wild and passionate feelings of his heart.

Long ere we knew his name, whilst the hot ferment of youthful thought made us desperate, we had formed many similar ideas to those propagated in "Festus," amongst many others still wilder. We thank God that a more humble and confiding spirit is now at work within us, and we trust that by our works we may never sow one seed of doubt relative to those revelations which are the only hope and comfort of myriads. Still we are determined to put the most kindly and christian-like construction upon them, and to look more at their general spirit than at isolated passages!

Now that Bailey has exhausted all phases of unbelief, we look for the highest poetic blessings from him. He will know how to administer relief to minds in similar miserable mental states.

All phases of mental suffering must have been endured by one who seeks to enlighten the variously-framed minds found in the human family.

Bailey wished to become God's poet-priest, which faith and humility will yet constitute him—(this was a favorite aspiration of our own from boyhood).

He approaches the nearest to our ideal of a poet, for he boldly seizes many problems that perplex and deeply interest the world's mind, and endeavours to solve them. His heart is one mass of religious feeling, and he sees every object through an elevating and divine medium. He knows well enough that everything created bears the stamp of divinity, and is thus full of deep spiritual meaning.

As for the beautiful and gorgeous imagery, which lies as thick on his pages as moonlit snow on the large leaves of yonder winter evergreens, we will only say—that it was never surpassed, and that never were the riches of a wealthier mind displayed to the world.

One word at the foot of this notice on the Poet's duty and province to explain religious mysteries.

He is the nearest resemblance by his deep and farseeing faculties (which God gave not to be wasted on trifles) of the prophets of old! If he really be a poet, and not a mere elegant versifier, his soul cannot but be suffused with a religious glow—for religion is the highest flower or apex of the mental tree, receives in its fragrant cup the refreshing dews of heaven, and takes its lovely hue from gazing so intently into the deep azure skies above.

It cannot be the poet's duty merely to beautify Nature in the eyes of his fellow-men, nor can he satisfy himself with so superficial a task. He must also show who gave its beauty and usefulness, why they were given, and the duty of those who are recipients of their bounty to their great donor; and we feel assured that natural truths will explain and carry out spiritual, and that spiritual will elevate and do the like service for natural.

All this despite the cry of puny souls, that "Theology is not the Poet's province," SHALL henceforward be done, and we will then see if the Poets are neglected (which is the present cry !)

The abstract terms and barren style of many theological dissertations may, perchance, instruct and interest the coldly learned man, or strengthen his icy faith, but are not ravenously seized upon by the world at large, who love warmth instead of frigidity, and warm living symbols instead of abstract ideas, represented by lifeless and stony words.

When the Theologian plumes his thoughts with the downy and buoyant wings of Poesy, then is every breast eagerly bared for them to nestle warmly and lovingly in, and in which they may bring forth their broods of high-soaring aspirations.

ATHERSTONE.—A great living poet, whose grand epic, "The Fall of Nineveh" will do honor to the age. It will long stand to defy the missiles of that splenetic criticism by which it has been assailed, and which have only fallen back blunted and harmless.

They who wish to know the grandeur and gorgeousness clothing the mighty eastern empires of the dead Past, must enter the lofty portals of this poem, and let the brilliant mind of its author conduct them through the glowing and voluptuous scenes, the terrific battles, and final downfall of the superb Nineveh, when its latently brave, yet effeminate monarch at last shook off the downy feathers of luxury and indolence, and in their stead donned the iron mail of war.

All the splendour, beauty, and majesty that the mind can con-

ceive as displayed in one of those defunct colossal empires of the golden Orient, illuminate the pages of this glorious work.

We read it on our lofty cliff eyrie overhanging the wild and eternal-voiced ocean, and so deeply were we engrossed and delighted with its pages, that but for the occasional importunities of our restless and affectionate dog, we had quite forgotten that we were not really in Nineveh as spectators, but sitting where a false move would have dashed both the poem and life from our brains !

We only know this truly Miltonic poet through the pages of his above-noticed poem, though we hear he has written much more almost equally admired.

KENT.—One of our latest poets. His classical expression, the delicate beauty of his thoughts, and his great command of expressive language, hint that he will complete the Trio of classically-natural poets, whereof Shelley and Keats are already members.

He has already given us “ Aletheia, or, The Doom of Mythology ” and other minor poems which are steeped in the purest and most crystal fount of Poesie, and are imbued with the deepest love and most delicate perception of the beauties and operations of Nature. One entitled “ Orchestral ” we think one of the most exquisitely graphic and imaginative gems of modern poetry.

Here is the germ of one of the truest poets who shed a lustre on any age draped in the waving folds of classic grace and elegance.

We hear some critic dared to call Kent a voluptuary when

criticising "Aletheia." If richness of imagery, fullness of expression, and ripeness of natural affections, constitute voluptuousness, then, and then only, is Kent guilty of the charge. Let us remind such critics that a filthy mind sees everything through its own medium, and to it, even Purity herself *seems* unclean.

When we survey our small but illustrious band of living poets, with such names as Bailey, Atherstone, Longfellow, Tennyson, Mackay, and Kent, as their leaders, who shall dare affirm that the present age will be a blank in the poetical annals of the English language?

And when we add the great events that have just taken and are yet taking, place; the revolutions that have agitated the whole European continent; the strides of science, and of wide-spread mental development, and chiefly this noble Industrial Exhibition of 1851, one of the greatest schemes of universal civilization and friendship yet on record; and also that these poets (with many rising stars) are still alive to sing their wonders and explain their deep meanings and influence over the world's mind, surely the present age shall appear to future times as a brilliant star of the first magnitude!

LONGFELLOW.—A deeply-beloved American poet, who, however, sighs a little too much after the dead Past, which seems to him as a setting sun; the Future appearing but as a small star of the seventh magnitude with uncertain, twinkling light.

Yet is his soul "a gem of purest ray serene," which also, certainly, "the dark unfathomed caves of ocean" (the deep ocean of thought) have borne; nor has he yet forgotten those dark caves of gloom.

Perchance he may yet flash back more strongly the cheering rays of the Sun of Hope, and may yet enliven as well as exalt mankind—the latter of which he has already done.

The world's face is amply suffused with tears; it is the poet's duty to wipe away a few—not to add more.

He has read of, and, perhaps, believed too implicitly, the glories of the Past; which, after all, if viewed MICRO-, instead of tele- scopically, would have shown far more defects than beauties, and far more misery than happiness.

One would be led to fancy that he had written many of his poems under the dense gloom of a pine forest (to which some sombre trees he is deeply attached). He is, however, a bard of deep love and warmest sympathy; of the purest heart, and most elevated and enlightened Christian feeling. The elegance and deep sentiment of his poetry (and prose likewise) are unsurpassed in any language.

May God prosper him, and throw a few more sunny gleams of Hope through the shadowy forest of his mind, and show more brilliantly to the world the clustering tufts of hopeful-eyed flowers that blossom under its gloom!

His grand "Psalm of Life" must neither be forgotten by himself nor the world!

EMERSON.—A great American essayist and poet, and may be truly called an Apostle of Nature. His poems are most original in every sense. His fine ideas are conveyed in the most grotesque and oracular style, and he appears a sort of male sibyl.

Not only his poetry, but all his writings, are overflowing with

deep and holy wisdom, whose springs flow from his own wealthy mind. He is one of Nature's most free-born and observant sons, and a strong spirit of independence and originality pervades every sentence he has blessed us with.

We thank God that he has seen fit to bestow so nobly a gifted mind upon the world ; and we trust that a firm mountain of faith will soon lift its crest through the clouds of doubt, from amidst the battling waves of scepticism which have long swept over his mind !

WILLIS.—The intense beauty of several of this American poet's compositions made us wild with delight when we first devoured them.

His " Scholar of Thebet-Ben-Khorat " and " Dying Alchemist," are two most exquisitely-beautiful, graphic, and instructive poems ; and his fine sketches of lovely Scripture scenes are unsurpassed in their minutely-described beauty.

His fancies are not nebulous and hazy, but most elegantly and distinctly chiselled out.

We see that his admiration of Byron led him, in one instance, to attempt the wit, and we may almost add, license, of " Don Juan," which is far below his usual flights.

Still, as a Poet, his duty is yet unperformed, for mere beauty cannot atone for want of earnestness in the advancement of the great human mind universal !

LEIGH HUNT.—The Father of a new school of poetry, where subtle fancies, and interwoven imagery, supplant the old broad-backed, daylight similes of the school of Pope, where one

thought was often swelled pompously out through a whole page. Keats was an admirer and follower of this master, and with him seemed to wish for the romance and brilliant fancy of Chaucer once more to fall into our poetical firmament.

Once we detested him for his attack on Byron when dead, but now he has explained that away, we love him for his kindliness and innocence of soul—his heartiness of sentiment, and hatred to all mawkishness ;—and wish heartily, that his body were as young as his soul.

His “ Tale of Rimini ” contains many exquisite and richly coloured word-pictures, and many notes of joy and sadness hover around a quivering string of narrative, filled with the deepest pathos.

LAMARTINE.—A noble French poet, whose life and works are of the most elevated and romantic description.

His mind is a huge crystal urn, filled with starry thoughts on the loftiest themes, human, natural, and divine.

His soul is a skylark lost in the azure of the boundless firmament, through which his joyous silvery notes fall over the listening world, gladdening those who hear them, and keeping their eyes strained heavenwards.

He was nursed in the free arms of Nature ; his more mature age passed in the contemplation of her beauties, or in observations on the world of man ; and the autumn of his life is loaded with fruitage ;—for his actions are noble, and his exertions in behalf of his fellow-men are unceasing. His noble conduct on several occasions in the late revolution will never be forgotten.

The lofty beauty and sylph-like delicacy of his thoughts, and

the intense beauty of the imagery in which they swim like the reflex of diamond stars in a sea of amethyst, carry our minds captive into the regions of enchantment.

May he long live to enrich the world's casket of gem-like souls !

COOK, MACKAY, BULWER.—The first two are nobly and enthusiastically endeavouring to infuse into the minds of their fellow-countrymen, and especially the lower classes, a love of natural beauty, of contentment with the lot God has been pleased to assign them for his own good ends, as well as for their own, and of love to Him and their fellow-mortals.

Eliza Cook, through her weekly journal, is pouring a flood of simply beautiful thoughts through the mental veins of her beloved country.

Mackay is inspiring them with love to God and all He has created, and is aiming annihilating shafts against lethargic pride, ignorance, and uncharitableness, and has endeavoured to teach them, that the necessity of Industry is NOT a curse, but the greatest blessing and consolation of man. (See his "Egeria" especially.)

He who knows the poetry of Mackay, and loves him not as a brother, must have but the dry heart of a mummy.

They are blowing away quietly but strongly the clouds of Ignorance and mistaken pride and prejudice, which hung darkly over, and kept the sunshine of contentment and happiness from gilding, their beloved native land.

Bulwer (Sir L.) is enlightening, through the seductive medium of amusement, and chiefly by his poetic prose (which we admire more than his poetry), the high as well as the low, and is gradually bringing the beauty and strength of the German style of

thought, enveloped in the flowers of fiction, to give depth to and beautify the minds of his countrymen. Let his lovely and romantic work "*Zanoni*" bear out what we have just uttered.

When in Germany we were astonished at the praises showered upon his name by that imaginative and enlightened people, and we were led to think that the mass of his countrymen did not yet sufficiently understand or appreciate him.

We shall here add two notices of men, who, though not known to the world as Poets, decked in the trappings of metre and verse, are so in prose, and what is more, in heart; they have also written poetry which shows they have the gift, if they like to use it.

DICKENS must not go unnoticed; he has deserved our praises too much for him

"To stand as one unfought and uninvited."

He is a true poet in heart; his prose pages teem with poetical expression of a very high order, and his sentiments are always noble and imbedded in deep sympathy. His talents have been well employed.

We look for, as the highest and purest flower of Dicken's literary growth, a great and enlightening prose-poem, which, being more compact than a novel, will bear the buffetings of time far better, and preserve his name uneffaced far longer.

No one has a broader or deeper foundation of the most acute observation to build his temple of truth upon, and we shall continue to look forward with expectation to see its lofty pinnacles glittering in, and casting their far-seen beauty through, the poetic firmament.

His fabric may be founded in the depths of the human heart, and may rise through human affections, sympathies, and failings, into the glorious heavens of man's aspirations and achievements.

ROBERT HUNT.—We will also recommend a lovely little work of this author's to all who love science when draped in the enticing garments of imagination. He conveys knowledge through the medium of one of the most chastely imaginative (whilst deeply instructive) fictions we ever cast our delighted eyes over. We allude to his "*Panthea*."

His "*Poetry of Science*" should also be read by all. Such books as these shine out of the modern thickets of literature, like the mild, but mystic lamps of glow-worms, enlightening the surrounding gloom.

There are other favourite living poets, whom we shall notice in a future chapter, as their works belong more to the past generation.





CHAPTER V.

JULIAN having thus dissected most of his favourite living poets, began to feel the glow of authorship steal over him as his friends awarded him a perhaps too plentiful meed of praise; and thinking, or wishing to do the world some service, he determined to enlarge upon his first design, and assume the grave "we" of authorship.

He now determined to dash up to and storm the very citadel of Poesy, and feeling that some rest and change would be necessary for his readers as well as himself, he resolved to throw into his work some small patches of personal interest and adventure, which would resemble the seats under green shady avenues, so refreshing to the heated and sunburnt traveller, and which might fit them for another march through the realms of criticism, mysticism, or dissertation.

Ascent of Mangerton.

THE morning sun threw its cheering beams on the enchanting lakes and mountains around.

Julian rose, and as his delighted eyes traversed their beauties, they at last rested on that mountain which so many happy ad-

venturers had ascended from time immemorial, whose BODIES were now dust, and lay far below its summit, but many of whose SOULS were now scaling the far loftier heights of heaven!

He could plainly discern a slight path trickling down its huge shoulders, and by that path he determined that day to reach its lofty scalp.

This mountain (if we may trust the legends, and who dare doubt them?) has the honour of being the summer residence of his Satanic Majesty, near the summit of which lies, hidden to mortals beneath, his huge "Punch-bowl," which fact led Julian to suspect that he might also occasionally deign to pay it a visit during the cold winter season, to warm himself with a fly dram, for how could he drink punch in the hot summer weather, being himself proverbially, of a rather warm temperament?

Having procured a gallant steed, which appeared for many reasons a descendant of Don Quixote's renowned Rosinante, he soon reached the mountain's base.

On commencing the rugged ascent, up started, as though indigenous to the spot, a short grotesque little figure, whose apology for a hat was instantly doffed and exposed a head which, with its grisly hair, resembled one of the numerous stones lying around surmounted with stunted grass, and a good-humoured voice with the "raal" Irish accent proceeding from it.

The cogent reasons given by that quaint little figure for taking a guide, "this could, blake, winther's day," in which the words "dangerous" and "benighted" often recurred, combined with the revelation that it was no other than the renowned and gallant "Captain Kidd" (alias "the Son of the Goat") who addressed him, induced Julian to secure his condescending services, and up they went together.

Long and tedious was the steep and rugged ascent, the PATH (as the Captain, by way of compliment, chose to call it) being guttered and torn by the winter storms. Huge stones lay in chaotic confusion and profusion around, and at last compelled Julian to part company with his stumbling and jolting steed, which a ragged and importuning little "equerry in waiting" took charge of, and away on foot stumbled himself and guide through the confused realms of gorse, heather, broken rocks, and loose stones.

And now the ragged skirts of the first cloud swept past them partially hiding the world below; up they toiled, now stumbling, now ankle deep in water, and again sinking into those treacherous bogs.

At last "The Devil's Punch-bowl" was reached, and sitting down on its brink by the "Bachelor's Well," which suggested many forgotten ideas, enveloped with dense flying clouds, they mixed its delicious waters with their "raal potheen," as the Captain pronounced it to be, who as they sat on their cold seat, in that wildly grand region, related many a shred of a "dhroul ould story and laagend."

Being refreshed, they set off at a canter up through the clouds, till they reached the highest point, where a heap of stones had been raised by previous adventurers, which Julian piled up, and making the "Kid" plant his small legs thereon, ascended his back and gave three cheers for his beloved Queen, which the mountain echoes repeated.

This feat accomplished, Julian sent back his wild guide, with instructions to wait below.

The damp clouds had drenched him, and dew-drops clustered like diamonds on his uncovered and flying hair. Still the bleak

mountain winds, the driving clouds, and the great elevation, gave him a fierce and invigorating delight.

Mist both within and without ! his mind had ever been swept by the clouds of mysticism, and now he felt the close resemblance between it and the surrounding cloudland.

Save, at intervals, the wild shouts of the shrieking winds, grave-like silence hung around that wild region ;—but the Babel-like confusion of his thoughts within was distinctly audible to his spiritual ear. Sitting on the precipice which overhangs the “ Devil’s Punch-bowl ” far beneath, he now caught fitful glimpses of the black and fearful looking waters of that mountain tarn, which reminded him of the dark glimpses he occasionally caught of the fearful gulf of life, as he had witnessed it through the breaks of his mental mists.

The dense clouds swept like frantic ghosts, pursued by the howling and fierce winds through the fearful chasm ;—and now, another break, but through it the sunlight fell over and gilded the deep smiling world below, resembling a saint’s holy vision of Heaven !

A wild legion of thoughts now swept like the Egyptian swarm of locusts through his mind, which darkened all outward objects, and threw him into a state of deep reverie !

What those thoughts were, the world may perhaps some day know.

The sound of a bugle now struggled through the clouds to his ear, and awoke the spirit-like voices of the echoing mountains, and with them his own mind.

A deep feeling of boundless love and reverence towards his Majestic Creator filled his mind, and formed a heartfelt, though

unuttered prayer and thanksgiving. Standing alone in this dense and lofty solitude, with his eyes cast heavenwards, how can words express his elevated feelings and aspirations?

Plucking a sprig of the white heather, as a memento of this adventure, for his distant but beloved sister, the fairy bells of the flowers clustering around the graceful stalk like the silver Pleiads,—he descended, found his kind-hearted and attentive little guide patiently waiting below, and not forgetting that the “Captain” had little else but his title to live upon that cold winter season, he sent him away, who, in return, poured an overpowering volley of compliments and blessings into him, the weight of which perhaps accounted for the many false steps of his devotional steed, which seemed inclined to prove itself as devout in descending as he himself felt on the summit of the mountain.

Evening was throwing her shadowy scarf over the enchanting scene below, as he solitarily descended that wild mountain, whose rugged and desolate foreground appeared a bold simile of the bleak and rocky path of Life;—but the stars were just twinkling through the heavens overhead,—and far below gleamed the lovely lakes, and glimmer’d the dim and dream-like beauties of Earth, and these foreshadowed the glories of Heaven, whose grandeur amply atoned for and overbalanced this short path of gloom.

The teeming thoughts, suggested by the grand natural scenery and phenomena he had that day witnessed whilst slowly and contemplatively descending, will never be forgotten by Julian!



CHAPTER VI.

Notices of various Poets.

HOPING he had given, by the preceding slight sketch, sufficient respite, Julian again dived into the throng of Poets, of various nations, whose names followed, without the slightest attempt at order or arrangement, even as they moved across the aforesaid illumined disc of his mind.

He held formal parterres in abomination, but loved the delightful confusion with which Nature scatters her flowers of various hues and scents. So leaving any who quarrelled with the disarray of his poet flowers, to blame, and settle it with Nature for suggesting the idea, he continued thus—

(To show we are not quite of the Goth genus, though so deeply attached to Nature and primeval simplicity of manners, we will introduce the ladies first.)

HEMANS.—Her quill fell from the gorgeous wings of the Bird of Paradise, and was dipped in moonlight, with which she

wrote those thoughts which are as the delicious waftings of jasmine, mignonette, and the richest rose. More refreshing are they to the weary pilgrim of life's arid desert than the cool rich milk and luscious kernel of the cocoa-nut, found in some fertile oasis.

Her poetry is one of the purest gems locked in the world's wealthy casket of Imagination. She softens all hearts by her exquisite beauty ; lofty and low minds love her equally, for she is the dear sister of all mankind.

Her richly-flowing fancies resemble a gracefully waving cascade steeped in moonlight, whose waters, after darting through, refreshing, and delighting lofty romantic minds, flow calmly away through the smiling valleys of more meek and humble souls, yet bestowing an equally cooling, and beneficial influence on all.

L. E. L. (MISS LANDON.)—Our English Sappho. Her mind was a golden urn filled with lusciously scented rose-leaves, but, alas ! the breath of life was not there. Her heart was a crushed rose-leaf, yet giving forth from that bruising the richest fragrance of pensive Poesy.

She lived in the world as in a lone gloomy cavern, and scarcely saw through its twilight the flowers that bloomed around. Her imagination (and she was all imagination) feasting only on those entwined by the dewy fingers of Memory and Fancy, the tearful dews of twilight lay thick upon them, and she sickened and died through excess of fragrance ; for, however delicious the breath of flowers, it is, alas ! also true, that, in too great a profusion, it is poisonous, and bears on its pinions the angel of death !

Thus, then, did L. E. L. breathe her last ; and bitter tears of love fell fast and watered the flowers o'er her early grave !

Like Sappho the fang of passionate love ; like Sappho she paved the way to, and dropped into, an untimely and tragical grave !

DANTE.—Though we shall speak in higher terms elsewhere of this great poet (linked with the names of Milton and Pollok), we mention him here first, to condemn one portion of his mighty epic.

He is a malignant demon in his “*Inferno*,” a purblind man in his “*Purgatorio*,” but a dazzling seraph in his “*Paradiso*.”

The vile use he made of the darker portion of the Christian revelations in his “*Inferno*,” by forging from them bitter and cursed weapons of satire against his enemies, proves that either he or the age he lived in had a very low appreciation of the real spirit of Christianity, which commands us to forgive our enemies, bless them that curse us, do good to them that hate us, and pray for those who despitefully use us and persecute us ! What noble maxims are these, and how lamentably far has Dante fallen below them in his “*Inferno* !”

A man possessing such grand, God-given powers, sinking them so low as to gloat over the most horrible ideal tortures they had invented for his enemies, must have been greatly influenced by the opinions of the age in which he lived ; and when we survey the Italian, or rather Florentine, history of his time, we are willing to acknowledge that it was the age in which he lived, that wrote his “*Inferno*” and “*Purgatorio*” through the medium of his hand.

AKENSIDE.—The bard of Imagination who sang the “pleasures” of his goddess.

He is the pioneer of young and wildly imaginative minds, who wish to present their daring flights to the world, by his having cut down many of the absurd prejudices against such a style of poetry, and by showing imaginative to be oftentimes as instructive and of quite as high a class as purely didactic poetry.

Though his works appear in many parts as if struck off in a fit of inspiration, they were most carefully and tediously composed, which arose, doubtless, from the difficulty of confining within proper limits the outpourings of his fervid fancy.

His imagination was, however, too fiery and restive to yoke itself to the cumbrous car of any great narrative or epic poem, so spent its energies in darting up and down the firmament of fancy like playful and fitful lightning. There is a sharp-cut beauty and originality about his conceptions that etches itself on the minds of his admirers.

His great poem, "The Pleasures of the Imagination," resembles the stem of a wide-spreading vine, covered with fresh green leaves and with occasional clusters of the most tempting purple grapes peeping from beneath their emerald covert.

BURNS.—The naturally-taught son of genius, who honoured the patriotic Caledonia with his birth.

With all his venial faults as a man, he is universally beloved as a poet, for his natural simplicity of heart joined with his affection for nature and his fellow-men.

His poetry has a straightforward manly strength, which captivates all who esteem truthfulness more than ingeniously-twisted ideas and artificial passion.

He disdained to make a mountebank of himself and strut in

filts, so kept near the earth and elevated those beauties which others, with far less power and genius, passed scornfully over.

He is the most striking example of the superiority of genius over wealth, rank, and all mere worldly-acquired honours; for when the memory of those who lolled in blazoned chariots and dwelt in palaces (whilst he was tormented by the hungry-eyed demon, Poverty) shall, with their bodies, have crumbled to dust, his name shall be a "household word."

COLERIDGE.—Never did a soul of a loftier poetical build sail calmly over the streams of time. His life was one thoughtful and imaginative dream, which the use of the narcotic drug (opium) did not by any means disturb.

One of Turner's most delicious and most mystical moonlights, hangs over and silvers his poetical visions.

Who does not regret the general fragmentary or half-developed style of many of his compositions? and that he has not left us a more plentiful banquet? (Though certainly those viands which he has supplied are of the choicest and costliest description!)

If any one can read his noble tragedy, "Remorse," without feeling deeply moved and elevated by the god-like generosity of Alvar's soul, let him be cautious ever afterwards how he "sets his foot upon a worm," for it is a near relation of his!

His universal love was boundless as space, and his moral and religious sentiments were of the loftiest class; nor do we fear, in opening his pages—though before unread—of meeting with any passage that may not be openly read to, and eagerly drank in by, pure feminine ears!

In prose as well as poetry he mightily excelled, and in both he

proves how well he understood and tried to execute his mission, by endeavouring to exalt and instruct mankind, and by inculcating all noble and generous sentiments.

Would that he had possessed an attentive Boswell to have saved his glorious conversations from oblivion!—and would that, instead of much mere dreaming, he had left us a few more of his visions of thought.

We thank God, however, for what He did enable his servant to bequeath, and hope to meet our beloved friend in the World of Spirits!

ROGERS.—Who has ever read the works of this noble-hearted poet, without their having produced a grateful and refreshing influence, or without their fiercer passions being softened and calmly elevated?—None, surely!

Who has not felt that a loving brother is conversing with him when perusing his “Pleasures of Memory;” or that a chaste son of nature, with a classically-moulded mind, is their guide through “Italy?”

He has not written much, certainly, when we survey his long life;—but we feel that a deeply pure and noble, an unostentatiously-kind and loving spirit, has dictated every line with which he has blessed the world.

This poet’s kindness and sympathy of heart are as deeply felt in his writings, as they have been displayed in his life. He has not attempted a flight into any wild imaginative regions, but he has sought, and successfully, to throw flowers of beauty over the rugged paths of man, and the ruins o’er which the Past has stalked and shattered with his destructive heel!

SCOTT.—The potent wizard of Romance, at the waving of whose wand come trooping on the stage of life again the noble sons and daughters of the age of chivalry. Gallant knights and “fayre ladyes,”—foaming chargers and splendid tournaments,—flashing armour and blazoned shields,—love and revenge,—haughty castles, and gorgeous banquets,—love, wine, and revelry,—all rise up and float athwart our mental sight, till the past—no longer a dead blank—stands in more than its former beauty and splendour before us!

Thanks to thee, thou noble and generous enchanter! We thank thee for thy kindly feeling towards the princely spirit of the dead age of chivalry, and for endeavouring to awake by its example a little generous fire in the cold breasts of modern days.

The fierce and cursed modern love of gold,* and base prostration to wealth, was unknown in those days; a nobler and more generous spirit was then abroad.

The world was not then worried by base and selfish dress-hunters; but the noble feelings of the heart were the riches they fought!

Scott is too widely known and beloved for us to notice him further.

YOUNG.—This grand but gloomy poet might, or *ought*, to have written that which he has left to the world before the Christian era;—before the intense irradiations of hope, shooting

* For instance, the Golden Lecturehip, King Hudson mania, and Religion generally become saleable, &c.

from so smiling a revelation of man's certain immortality and future state of bliss, threw a shower of cheering beams over the before dark and ignorantly groping mental world.

A knowledge of, and belief in, such revelation makes the present Life appear to a generous and well-balanced mind as the flower-garden of his spirit's childhood, through which it roams, gathering strength and lovely thoughts to enliven its path to the spirit-world. Had Young been a heathen philosopher, we MIGHT have expected some of the dense gloom that deluges his works.

We fear that disappointed worldly ambition was the chief root of the melancholy yew tree that o'ershadows his pages.

Some years back, at the deserted ruins of the Abbey of Aghadoe, a poor wretched woman collected the broken coffin boards that are so ruthlessly scattered about its deserted burying-ground, built herself a hut therewith, and there, surrounded by the exposed and thick-strewn emblems of mortality (the skulls and bones of the departed), she dwelt, till Death added her relics to his rich hoards which were piled around. Her miserable hut then fell, and thus ended her deathly life.

Young built himself a mental coffin hut; lived and died therein; but bequeathed to the sufficiently-wretched sons of mortality, the thoughts engendered by his gloomy connection with deathly subjects.

That his mind was capable of engendering the grandest conceptions, we do not dispute: but knowing this, we are led to regret the more, that earthly disappointments should have dragged it to the darkest scenes, instead of buoying it up to the grandest regions of faith, hope, and happiness.

We also admit the existence in his works of many lofty thoughts and noble conceptions, which being thrown up on a gloomy background gleam forth more brilliantly—even as a black and stagnant pool reflects more clearly the lofty sparkling stars.

Misanthropy is NOT poetry; and darkness and despondency, however finely pictured, are deathblows to, or deaden greatly, the noblest aspirations of man.

Had not Young been a professing Christian, (and a Christian minister withal!) we should have treated him more gently; but we feel it due to the Christian religion to say, that it is the annihilator of darkness, despair, and misery, to those who TRULY believe in it; and herein is a striking proof of its power.

Still, with a certain class of minds, his works, we trust (though they have cast a gloom o'er all things for a time), have produced seeds of a deeply-religious growth, which have saved them from the pitfalls of worldly pride, and from building all their hopes on this earth's unstable foundation.

There is a majesty about many of his thoughts, and the grand imagery in which he arrays them, which annihilates forgetfulness.

All minds are not influenced by Hope! Some require the lower but oftentimes more powerful incentive of fear, to command their avoidance of the snares of the world. To such minds Young does not often vainly appeal.

His mind was of a colossal build, and we must cast a tear of regret over his memory, that the disappointments to which he was a prey chilled his noblest powers.

Sorrow and despondency, however, give a double zest to

Hope, when she arrives attended with her angelic train of smiling blessings.

COWPER.—This is the bard of common sense, the enco-miast of all noble sentiments springing from either moral or religious foils.

When we look at the manly vigour, at the generous and hopeful spirit pervading his works, and then remember the miseries, both mental and physical, which clung to, and gnawed away his existence, we hail his name with the greatest admiration!

We have placed him immediately after Young to show the different influence that the Christian religion, when purely believed in, had on a noble though distressed mind—distressed infinitely more than Young's in many ways. We would also say here, that Cowper understood his duty as a Poet far better, for though his own mind was often darkly clouded and miserable, still he wished not to make his sorrows those of every breast. He is a noble example of a faithful Christian, and a proof of religion's elevating and soothing influence over distress.

He had great versatility of talent, and his genius and powers of satire were such, that (if backed by a vigorous physical organization and sanguine temperament) would have forced Vice to have crawled from her high places, and to have shrouded her foul, slimy, serpent's head, in dust and darkness.

WILSON.—He is the bard of sweet romantic dreams and fancies. His soul is a lovely azure haze streaked by golden sunbeams, through which the beauties of nature and of the human sympathies stream as through a prism, lending to the

cold white light of common observation the glowing colours of the rainbow.

His “*Isle of Palms*” is a golden isle in the sapphire sea of Imagination, clothed with beauty and loveliness, and with silvery clouds of the purest human affections overcanopying it.

There is a fearful earnestness and reality about his “*City of the Plague*” which shows the vigour of his genius.

He is a fine example of a passionate and enthusiastic poet, robed— notwithstanding such fiery qualities—in the garments of Purity and Religion, and taming down his impulsive temperament to give a friendly help to the car of human progress.

He loved the old Ocean as a father, and many lovely descriptions of it occur in his works.

MILMAN.—We are surprised that this poet is not more universally known by his countrymen!

There is an orieny of colour about his imagination that dyes every object upon which it falls with the richest tints. Or it may be compared to the richly-stained window of some dim cathedral, which throws on every spot or figure over which the light passing through it falls, a most heavenly and faintly glory.

His “*Fall of Jerusalem*” has a fresh breezy beauty and delightfulness about it, joined with a vigorous action, that carries us on a bold, rapid stream to its conclusion.

His other poems show great command of powerful and yet classical language, a chaste elegance of thought, a profusion of glowing imagery, and a vigorous manly spirit, that do him honour both as a man and a Christian minister.

Would that many of his brother clergymen whom we could

name followed his example, and gave us a small portion of his beauty, manliness, and originality in their works ; for though they write prose (and, thank God, they do not often attempt poetry), it is not absolutely necessary that they should be PROSE !

SCHILLER.—As bold, determined, and renowned a poet in Germany, as Byron in Britain ; but taking a universal instead of an individual view of the world ; and, instead of wasting his days in selfish misanthropy, throwing all his heart and soul into the progression and happiness of his fellow-men.

He is one of whom his country may be justly proud : a more elevated, and enthusiastic poet never enlightened the world.

His daring tragedy, “ *The Robbers*,” though written with much of the unwise impetuosity of youth, contains many noble sentiments, and tremendous strength of expression.

Never did a poet so nobly and unceasingly strive, from his youth up to his latest breath, to elevate and instruct mankind ; and the fearless way, despite all opposition, with which he threw his thoughts before the world commands our highest admiration.

There was no stilted grandeur and false-seeming about Schiller ; his genius was far too great and powerful to need, and he far too proud to use them.

His ballads are of the highest order, with a fine moral in the heart of each. His well-known one, “ *The Diver*,” is magnificent, and the most powerful ever written. (Bulwer’s translation of this is a masterpiece.)

Would that we were never without a Schiller in the world, to throw his fire and life into its progressive movements !

BOWLES.—A pensive bard, who looked at the world with moist and hazy eyes, and thought the damp sadness lay IN the world, instead of ON his own ocular lenses.

There is, however, much to be admired in his works, which are suffused with the kindest sympathies.

“The Grave of the Last Saxon” is a fine collection of word-painted pictures; the graphic sketches of natural scenes, and bold delineations of human character, make this poem resemble a noble picture gallery.

The finely-sketched character of William the Conqueror, and, above all, the night scene in the dark storm-riven forest, with the impressive night funeral of poor Harold, are most distinctly and finely portrayed.

This poem will be read by all Englishmen with instructive delight!

SOUTHEY.—A sort of mytho- and theological rag gatherer, who was ever seeking after the creeds, new or tattered, scattered over the face of the globe.

He had a most powerful and brilliant imagination—(which expanded his works a little too much, and made them too corpulent)—a most original style of versification, that called forth the anathemas of the “Fadladeens” of his time, and the most sturdy independence of soul, which enabled him to bear up against the tide of raillery till it had expended itself.

He had a broad and powerful intellect, which enabled him to grasp great themes boldly, and carried him dry-shod through all the streams of mysticism and superstition pouring from the

East, Greece, and Germany, to the firm ground of Christian belief.

His example, as a firm believer in the Christian revelation, notwithstanding his ponderous weight of learning, wisdom, research, and great mental powers, should not be forgotten by those smaller minds that rail against it.

“The Curse of Kehama” is a mighty and well-sustained flight, and is valuable not only for its own high merits, but for the teeming thoughts on the loftiest subjects, which it suggests to the imaginative and enlightened reader.

MARLOWE.—His “Doctor Faustus” is a terribly earnest and a powerful tragedy, which is now looked upon as a specimen of the exciting but lower species of drama.

It shows tremendous vigour both of imagination and language.

The highest minds know that some vague and misty terror produces a deeper thrill of dread and horror than a distinctly portrayed scene, where nothing is left to the uncertain doubts and undefined fears of the imagination.

When devils are made to stalk in their own dark livery before our eyes as distinctly embodied shapes, there is a low species of animal instead of high spiritual dread, which debases rather than exalts or instructs mankind.

His other works, though they are sprinkled with fine passages, are mostly over coloured, (or *daubed*, as artists would say,) and are frequently swathed in the folds of bombast and rant.

MOORE.—The embodied soul of Melody, and the patriotic son of Erin.

The Oriental glow of his imagery, the melodiousness of his verse, the elegance of his language, and the ardour of his passionate love songs, would lead us to suppose (did we not know otherwise) that he was cradled in Persia, and trained by Hafiz himself.

The "Arabian Nights," which he devoured eagerly when young, had doubtless a great influence over his poetical genius.

His collecting the dying airs of his native land, and presenting them to the care of the world through the medium of his lovely verses, was a noble achievement, and has been enthusiastically rewarded.

Some of his earlier poems were a little TOO GLOWING, and we are happy to see that he has not given them a place in the last complete edition of his works, and that, if they have an existence at all, it is a precarious and outlawed one.

What can exceed the lofty beauty of the "Loves of the Angels," the opening of which is superb, and carries us high above the Earth, at a bound.

"Paradise and the Peri," an episode in "Lalla Rookh," steeped in lofty religious simplicity and purity; and "The Epicurean" (which is poetry clothed in the garments of prose), the most lovely and elegant tale conceivable, by their religious tendency, will amply atone for the faults of any of his early effusions.

His noble veneration for the memory of poor Byron, and the proof of his true friendship after death had parted them, together with his manly sentiments, and hatred of cant and false-seeming, have endeared his name to thousands.

May God bless his latter end, and relieve him from the pangs of gnawing disease, which we fear will otherwise soon deprive the world of its love-star's light!

LANDOR (W. S.)—A learned man who has written poetry, but he was too coldly wise and steeped in learning to possess at the same time the fine, free, dashing soul of a great Poet.

His “Gebir” is a strange mystical sort of poem, which, as Southey almost adored, and Shelley admired it, must contain greater beauties than we have as yet discovered. Perhaps it is our dislike to rigidly and coldly precise compositions, that prevents our enthusiasm.

His “Imaginary Conversations” we admire far more than his poetry.

HOOD.—Poor Hood! who does not honour thy name, thou man of the most opposite qualities, wit and pathos, yet brightly excellent in each!

Whoever knows thy works loves thee deeply and pities thy unfortunate lot. How could the World let its most loving and feeling son die in such utter poverty?

Hood’s poems of wit are the drollest, and his poems of sympathy on behalf of his suffering and forgotten fellow-creatures are the most deeply touching, yea, harrowing, in their noble earnestness, ever written.

Who, knowing even his well-known “Song of the Shirt,” and “Bridge of Sighs,” can ever cease to deluge his name with endearing epithets? Our tears flow, and we become all heart!

Let the present age do that justice to his memory which may partly atone for his sorrows and neglect when living!

The world should never be without a Hood, to sing the sorrows of the wretched and forlorn, and appeal to their more fortunate brethren in their behalf!

GRAY and COLLINS.—The two elegant and chaste Poets of Britain, who have given us the least in quantity, but as much as any in *quality*.

Gray's "Churchyard Elegy" is unequalled in delicacy of sentiment, originality, harmony of rhythm, and pure affection. The love and high estimate of simplicity, which is an attribute of every true Poet, is evidenced as strongly in this one little poem as in all others put together.

Noble simplicity is a proof of true greatness whether found in literature or in the heart of man. Gray was abundantly endowed with this quality, notwithstanding his occasional affectations, both in composition, and conduct.

Despite what certain modern and coxcombical lecturers say in condemnation of Gray's expressive lines,

" Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air "

we maintain their kindly and feelingly expressed truth, for how many would beam forth brightly, if ignorance, disease, or other numerous circumstances, had not quenched their light !

Had not such men have scraped together a small hoard of muddy fame, they would gladly have sheltered themselves under the loving shadow of his winged words !

Collins' fine " Ode on the Passions " can never be forgotten or unadmired whilst men are possessed of minds, or till the World wheels up with her children to the judgment-seat of God !

His fame hangs (like a golden leaf on a lofty branch) chiefly upon this magnificent ode, the graphic power and exquisite beauty of which we fear will never be equalled.

He, however, forsook the real for the ideal world so much that

he at last became an unfit denizen of the former, the consequence of which was insanity.

POPE.—This poet collected the wisdom of his day, and through the means of the aptest imagery brought it down to the comprehension of even the young school-boy.

His “*Essay on Man*” is a nobly instructive poem, painting the foolishness of man’s vain repinings in strong colours. He was a powerful and rather spiteful satirist.

Still we like not the general glitter of his style, which resembles the factitious gleams of divers-coloured broken glass, more than of pure gems. His versification resembles, by its extreme polish, a stream of quicksilver which runs through the mind instead of depositing the wisdom it contains therein.

A Poet’s thoughts should resemble burs that may stick to and irritate the mind when thrown into it till they have produced thought and attention.

Similes drawn from natural objects are filled with fresh and bursting life, and take deep root in the mind, but drawn from dead artificial objects, like many of Pope’s, they but amuse the fancy at the first sight, and then their commonness and lifelessness disgusts. The first are drawn from the works of God, and have consequently an innate grandeur or beauty—but the latter, being drawn from the imperfect works of man, are feeble, ephemeral, and ineffective in comparison.

Pope’s “*Essay on Man*” is, however, a noble work, and has been translated into most European languages.

BEATTIE.—Let the world, now science is taking such gi-

gantic leaps, not forget Beattie's truly noble little poem, "The Hermit," which of itself would be sufficient to float his name down the tide of ages. Would that every bewildered votary of science and knowledge might have as bright and comforting a conclusion to his feverish chase after the ignis-fatuus-like conjectures of his own excited mind, as that hermit!

His "Minstrel" is a fine specimen of the confluence of the highly-classical and deeply-natural streams of poetry. It is draped in the garments of most beautiful and appropriate imagery, of wisdom, and of love.

He has written comparatively little poetry, but that is of the first water.

GOLDSMITH.—This generous man was all heart, and is undoubtedly the most universally beloved British Poet. People of every age and stamp look with loving reverence on his name.

He took not his flights merely for a favoured few, but for the edification of all. The gushing feelings of his own warm heart draw those of all others into their strongly-flowing stream, and the frosty-hearted man who sets out with him, having a wintry coldness around and within him, finds ere long that the genial summer heat has thawed his ice, and brought the fresh springs of latent kindness to the light.

His poetry flows gracefully as a calm but strong-flowing and enriching river, not in an artificial embankment like Pope's but with a pleasant natural murmur; and its banks are clustered with fragrant nodding flowers.

Several well-known passages from his larger poems, with which every noble-hearted school-boy is enamoured, are more forcibly

appealing to our kindest sympathies, than any we are acquainted with in the whole realms of poetry.

Goldsmith was not, nor wished to be, as a flashing, sparkling diamond, but a softly gleaming pearl, which he was.

But when the world deluges his name with blessings, why should we do more than add ours?

Crabbe, Chatterton, Croly.

CRABBE.—The bard who essayed to sing “the short and simple annals of the poor,” but generally contrived to make them rather too long, inasmuch that he who starts with him must take in a prodigious stock of patience.

The lives and adventures of one or two ideal Jacks and Betseys are enough as examples, by any one poet; the world looks for something higher than a continual repetition of such themes, the simplicity of which it considers but affectation when overdone.

Still, those who can tame themselves down to walk through Crabbe’s simple meadows, will receive the benefit of the refreshing breezes of poetry that continually come wafting over them.

CHATTERTON.—A grand lightning bolt, that burst and destroyed itself as soon as it left the clouds (of imagination) and touched the chilly earth. He would have made a mighty poet had he lived. Without entering into the merits of the Rowley controversy at length, let us merely draw this lesson from his unhappy fate,—that wherever Genius descends to the pits of Falsehood, that the gnawing demons of Self-Contempt, and Dis-

guft, feize the victim as their lawful prey,—until Repentance, or Suicide relieve the poor wretch from his mifery.

CROLY.—A Chriftian poet with a powerful genius, which throws a funfet fplendour over all it falls upon.

There are many magnificent paffages in his poems. The retreat from Mofcow is as finely pictured as anything in “Childe Harold;” and his “Chrift’s Entry into Jerufalem” brings the lovely fcene boldly before the eyes of the moft unimaginaive.

Strength and power of both imagination and language, filtered through a pure religious medium, conftitute him one of the fineft poets of the nineteenth century.

BRYANT.—The American Gray. His mild and claffically elegant poetry is deeply fuffufed with the fpiritual meanings of Nature, and the child-like love he bears her. Though now an old man, he is ftill young in mind, for he has never left Nature’s fide; but looked up to her expreffive and loving eyes with filial affection. She has rewarded him for it, as fhe will all thofe who truly love her, with the elixir of eternal youth.

His poetry, like his heart, will never grow old; and his hopeful and religious fpirit fhall long be efteemed, fink into, and give a youthful glow to many a poor, weary foul.

KIRKEWHITE.—A mournful yew tree, bathed in the glooms of night, dropping his blood-red berries, or drops of melancholic agony over the, to him, tomb-like world.

Ill health and fcepticifm, joined with over application, were the roots of this gloom; and when the clouds of doubt cleared

away, and the fun of revelation burst upon his dazzled eyes, his body had become too weak to allow him to feel and sing the full splendour of its hopefulness.

He had a noble spirit, which would have become a mighty one, if time, health, and happiness, had fully matured it.

The beauty and humility of sentiment in his noble "Ode on Disappointment" prove how great and deep a mind it proceeded from; and his fragment "Time"—boldly declares that we lost by his untimely death one who would have been the grandest poet of his generation.

MONTGOMERY (JAMES).—A universally-beloved poet of the Goldsmith genus.

His patriotic and philanthropic principles cast a halo around his name and illumine his works. His poems against slavery are the breathings of a noble and free-born soul.

There are many passages in "The West Indies" of surpassing loveliness, and which have often brought tears to our eyes.

In his "Greenland," the descriptions of nature in that clime are often magnificent. The mountainous icebergs swim distinctly and flash their light before our mental sight, and there is an icy clearness and freshness about the whole. The wondrous superstitions of that ignorant country are finely and graphically told, and we feel, whilst perusing this fine poem (even though it be in summer), a cold but bracing atmosphere enveloping us, so strong is its effect on the imagination.

But as he is beloved by every child who knows his works (and who does not?) as well as "children of an older growth," we will only add our blessings, and bid him adieu!

CAMPBELL.—The Bard of Hope. His chaste and classic expression is equal to Gray's, and has more manly fire and energy.

His beauties are felt and appreciated by all minds—more, perhaps, than any British poet. Not one grain of immorality is mixed with his passionate bursts. A high moral, patriotic, or religious scarf is thrown gracefully over every sentiment. We see nothing to censure or apologize for. Purity, both in style and sentiment, was his goddess, on whose altar he laid his offerings; nor were they ever rejected. He was a subdued, but chaste and elevated Byron.

Who could ever read his “Pleasures of Hope,” without wishing to grasp his warm hand? Who could peruse his “Gertrude of Wyoming” without a sighing tribute to his pathetic powers and truthfulness to Nature?—his “Flower of Love lies Bleeding,” without a passionate burst of sympathy for the woes of its high-souled heroine, and the burning majesty of expression she is endowed with in recounting them?—or his “Hohenlinden,” without amazement at his wondrous command of grand and appropriate imagery?

We see from one of his short poems that he had felt the bitter meaning of the word—misanthropy; and we honour him the more for not selfishly torturing the world with its sombre hues, though none could have painted them with darker or grander effect.

His truthful soul and child-like simplicity of heart, notwithstanding the greatness of his mind, proved him one of the truest poets of whom Britain can boast, and his name shall shine forth brightly when many of the popular idols of his day are broken and in the dust.

Licentiousness and impurity carry the seeds of their own early decay; but noble simplicity and purity increase and expand in an equal ratio with Time.

In such ratio, then, shall the fame of Campbell expand.

BARRY CORNWALL.—His renowned songs have all the beauty, and greater force and freshness than Moore's. His imagination is bold and vigorous, and his fancy throws around his compositions the most luxuriant tendrils, clustered with airily-hung flowers of thought.

His larger poems resemble the bold stems of high-foaming pines, through whose dark-fringed tops the glittering moonbeams dart, and fall on the gleaming leaves of the giant ivy wreaths entwining them, and on the fanciful flowers of the sweet-scented woodbines, intermingled with and hanging out their waving tassels from such dark coverts.

Thus ended Julian's notices of individual poets.

He was astonished at the great number he claimed as the mental friends of his youth, and whom he had thus compelled to file past in single review before his critical eye. He had fearlessly uttered his opinions, and knew he could not be blamed for lack of honest and independent feeling, if he were for erring judgment.

In noticing so many, Julian wished to give those who had not perused the works of the poets here enumerated, a slight sketch of their different merits or demerits; and thus considered them chiefly from the ethical point of view.

He spoke not of those whom he had read only for information at a later period, but about whom the youthful tendrils of his

heart were entwined ; and this must account for the warmth of his praises in many instances. They, however, who read poetry with a coldly critical eye, ought to have it dashed from their hands. THEY can never feel the intense beauty therein, which throws the warm and elevated mind into ecstasies.





CHAPTER VII.

Mucrofs Abbey (or Irelagh).

T WAS winter. The sombre shades of evening were gathering over the silent world, when a dark-muffled stranger moved reverentially up the solemn and solitary avenue leading to the ancient and deserted ruins of Irelagh.

Having entered the rustic wicket, as he threaded the dark and narrow pathway winding to that ghostly remnant of former times, startled hares sprang up and disappeared beneath the gloom of the wild-grown copse. Dark bats whirled in quaint figures overhead; and gray owls, startled from their evening meal, rose before his footsteps, and wheeled away through the dusk like spectres to their dark ivied haunts.

A thrill of chastened awe shot through him as he entered the shattered and ivy-decked pile of ruins, and his steps echoed loudly through its gloomy stillness as he stumbled up its uneven and vaulted aisles, over broken and sinking slabs, that once bore inscriptions, long since effaced, to the ruined, moss-grown tombs of the once famous O'Donoghue's and Macarthy More's.

Taking his seat on an ancient monument, through the broken apertures of which the brass handle of a dark coffin was perceptible, and giving loose rein to his thoughts, which at first seemed numbed by the awful silence and dense gloom around, this deserted and crumbling temple of the dead gave a deeper solemnity than his soul had ever yet acknowledged.

Evening was fading into night; and behold! those god-like senators, the lofty stars, came sweeping forth with their flashing silver robes into the opened halls of Heaven, to join God's solemn conclave, and sit sublimely enthroned on high.

The young moon, like the frailest little silver canoe, floated airily above the dark mountain tops, and threw a faint and supernatural light over the visionary scene, which the stranger surveyed with exquisite delight through the open portals of the ruined abbey.

The heavily-waving folds of the ivy tapestry gleamed sickly in the faint beams of that infant moon, like the softened face of old age at the cheering smile of infancy, and gave forth an occasional clatter, as the Night Breeze bade them clap their palms at her approach. Now a restless bird darted from its uneasy resting-place in quest of a more congenial one.

Now all was moveless and silent. The bones of the "great departed" lay around; lovely lakes and noble mountains bounded the distant view. The crumbling ivied walls rose above, and high over all sat the glorious stars and shined the virgin moon, shooting their arrows of loving light on this otherwise dark world of ours, and cheering it with the assurance that not alone and unheeded did it dive through the twilight depths of space.

Many a high thought on the mysteries of birth, death, the

universe, and immortality, arose and darted their brilliant light from the depths of his soul, which was deeply sombered by the deathly scenes around; even as those brilliant stars over head rose from the gloom of night, without which they had remained unseen, and their hopeful teachings had been unrevealed.

Long and deep was his reverie. The forms of the departed lying around rose up, and formed a long and ghostly procession through the silent aisles and corridors. Some were fierce and wild in mien, others meek and faintly; but most wore the garb of sadness. Savagely bearded and gigantic warriors, solemnly hooded monks, faintly maids and tottering matrons, all swept on in a never-ending stream from the dark cloisters, through the noble porch, and faded away into the silent moonlight. Others of more ethereal mould appeared to float over head, through whose transparent forms the stars shot their arrowy silver, even as they gleam through the filmy trains of freely-sweeping comets.

Long did the imaginative stranger suffer his fancy to hold her powerful reign, till the damp chilly air of this humid spot at last compelled him to rise and shake off his visions. Away fled his spiritual companion hosts; but as his steps again clove the silence, a fairy or spiritual melody seemed to fall upon his ears, and a silvery and smiling light to float through the noble pile.

He now plunged through a low portal into the deepest gloom, and groping his way through "darkness that might be felt," the hollow splash of water drops stopped his career, and hinted caution.

Feeling, at last, another doorway, he groped through a low passage, and discovered faintly the small pilasters and arches of the cloisters, and drawing nearer the great central yew tree, at

length saw the cheering faces of his beloved friends, the stars, peeping through its dark deathly-looking canopy, seeming to hang on its giant branches like those rich gems which Aladdin plucked from the costly trees of enchantment.

Ye lovely and mighty stars ! Why did the foolish astrologers of yore think that ye condescended to tell the individual fates of petty mortals, when their main happiness depends in not being acquainted with their impending fate, which though eventually dark, is compensated for by Hope's alluring and comforting smiles beforehand.

Why did they not see that ye were the bearers of good tidings to all men, as one of your phalanx was at Bethlehem ?

That ye were the symbols of Eternity and Immortality ! For ye are the bright sentinels watching ever at the wide portals of the Infinite, ever speaking in words of light the vast majesty of the Great Spirit who thought ye, into being,—and supports ye ever on the electric chain of his bright spirit, by which ye are ever sustained, and filled with life, light, and majesty. —Ever watchful when the human world lies hushed in the arms of dreamful Sleep,—ever beckoning with twinkling fingers man's earth-born soul from his little garden-plot of a World, which he once thought so great, through the wide fields and pastures of space whose bright-clustered flowers are worlds,—till lost in affrighted wonder at the sublime and awful grandeur of those endless shoals of worlds, suns, and systems, still rolling so melodiously, and unerringly onwards from the abyss of past Eternity, onwards,—ever onwards,—he feels his own insignificance as a Man, but his majesty as a Spirit capable of piercing from the watch-tower of his own little island-world, lying in the endless oceans of the

infinite, into such depths, unaided by material agency ;—that a small sand-grain of his creator's mountainous omnipotence and omniscience has been granted to his own spirit, rendering it immortal ;—and that his soul is a concentrated drop of the vast infinite Spirit of Nature, (by virtue of which he is enabled to take such lofty flights,) encased in a material mortal form ! Gradually then dawns this brightsome truth over his mind that Spirit is immortal, absolute, positive, infinite !—and matter is mortal, passive, subsidiary and finite ;—the lever which the spirit wields to carry out its designs !

Thus communed the stranger with his own heart, which, despite all the gloom and worn-out spirit husks or shells which lay rotting and rotted around, saw even in Nature alone sufficient to satisfy him of a bright immortality.

His silent thanksgivings having ascended, he bade the noble and impressive old ruins a loving adieu and departed ; but never shall that imaginative stranger forget that impressive night—nor the ancient Abbey of “ Irelagh.”*

Need we identify this stranger with Julian ?

* We have to warmly thank our beloved friend, the author of “ Irelagh,” for the romantic interest we first felt in this venerable pile, in which delightful and instructive work the Abbey is the scene of several most impressive occurrences. The opening passage is nobly impressive, and bears the stamp of true genius. But being an intimate friend of ours, we must refrain from uttering the praises we should otherwise certainly do.



CHAPTER VIII.

Introduction.—Definition of Time.—Relative Position of Man and Nature.—Explanatory Vision of Thought.

JULIAN'S wanderings among the primeval and grandly impressive mountains, which remain as they first towered above chaos (save the huge rocks that are tumbled about their summits by the posterior Deluge), and now stand as memorials of that dark period of the world's history, joined with his night-visit to and meditations in the ancient ruins of Irelagh, gave a deep solemnity to his thoughts; and during his succeeding silent and solemn night-vigils, the following pages, containing a disentombed youthful vision, soared solemnly up from the depths of his mind, as he usually sat, with lights extinguished, gazing upon the distant dark-looming mountains, nearer lakes, and the lofty stars glassed deeply therein.

Though he knew it was immature, he felt there was a spirit of holy love o'ershadowing it, which would not be unheeded by those who read with pure minds. Let, however, Longfellow's

exquisite, yearning lines apologize for its insertion here, as a memento of his beloved youthful thoughts.

“Visions of Childhood! stay, oh stay!
Ye were so sweet and wild!
And distant voices seemed to say,
It cannot be! They pass away,
Other themes demand thy lay,
Thou art no more a child!”

Julian wished by this vision to prove to the world that the elevation of Nature was not the debasement of Divinity, as had been often falsely hinted, but that it raised and gave life to the operations of both in the eyes of mortals, and made them esteem the goodness and majesty of God in a far loftier degree.

He knew that the Christian religion was one which touched the heart, more, perhaps, than the mind; for he saw that those who had small mental powers, but were rich in natural affections, were often more deeply influenced, and totally renovated, by its doctrines of love and good-will to all men, than deeply learned and powerful minds; that it was consequently a more natural religion, and that natural solutions should be the means employed in explaining and giving life and deep meaning to it.

Therefore it was that Julian, with the deepest feeling of love and reverence to God, sketched brokenly the salient features of that vision,—hoping it would awake as comforting trains of thought in other minds as it had done in his own.

He also knew that the reason religion was now so comparatively lifeless was, that it was taught and considered in too abstract a light—that Heaven, and God, had lost their fullness of meaning—had become mere sounding words,—that the immediate pre-

sence of the Creator was not felt in his works, and that having created the World and Man, had now left them to their own devices,—that it was becoming too much a religion of the mind rather than the heart, and consequently produced but a slight and wavering effect in comparison.

The heart and mind must equally feel the effect and acknowledge the influence of any religion that is calculated to totally renovate and raise the human family. The mind may test and acknowledge its truthfulness, but the heart, or love, alone can give that absorbing interest and intense life, without which it is but like the unfruitful fig tree, with many green leaves, which look pleasant and beautiful at a distance, but when more critically observed, is found to bear leaves only and no fruit; and like that tree shall it be blasted, and gazed at with scorn by all the passers by.

We have now approached the climax of our subject. And here, O Father of Lights! we beseech thee to give us that true discernment and elevation of mind in the treatment of so lofty a theme, without which all that may be uttered must be but vain emptiness.

From the birth of Time, or animated matter (the latter, when blended with sentient life, being the natural symbol of the former)—let us rather say from the birth of Man (for Time belongs only to mind whilst cooped in and giving life to matter)—Nature has essayed, but for the chief part unsuccessfully, to explain her meaning to her children, the denizens of Time, who were cradled on her loving breast.

Time results from matter animate, or in motion; dead, inanimate matter belonging to Eternity, or its prototype the Divinity,

being but His store-heap of unwrought material, from which He moulds at will new combinations of useful or beautiful forms, as receivers of his superabundant life and love.

What had the dead bulk of the black mountains and stagnant oceans of formless chaos to do with Time? No life, and consequently no events (by which Time is measured); no alternations of night and day,—and if there were, no sentient mind to take cognizance of them. The dark pall of a dead Eternity hung over the world, and till a spark of spiritual fire from the Divinity, enclosed in the form of Man, was shot into it, what was it but a dark nonentity?

The soul of Man then was the creator of Time in this Earth, and should that spark ever again become extinct, another dark Eternity will swallow up this now pulsing and life-breathing world, and a second time will it become a dark nonentity!

This, however, shall never be—sooner shall she be transfigured and sublimed, her unworthy portions purged away in elemental fire, and then, joined and linked with her sister planets, enter with joy the glowing portals of her fire the sun! (We have both a natural and a spiritual meaning embalmed in this idea.)

The World lay as a lifeless germ of thought, in the boundless circle of the Mind of Deity, till the fire of sentient life fell into it, from which moment it has been and is now gradually developing. And here we call the whole universe of things and events to witness, that this divine thought is not yet developed or disentangled, and that the Mind of Deity, as seen reflected in its jarring and contradictory events, is still working out and will yet brightly solve this difficult problem!*

* Which problem is this, (and all religions picture it forth);—the appa-

Now, as this World is but an unit and representative (to the human mind) of the myriad clusters of Worlds imbedded in space, we mortals may form some faint idea of the grandeur and infinity of their and our great Creator's powers,—in whose soul such spheres lay, but as the germs of thought now only in blossom, the fruit of which has yet to appear and fill the Universe with beauty, plenteousness, and gladness!

God created matter to serve particular and useful ends. Earth then, is the Mother who bore, and God is the Father who begat Man, who is their mutual child. God supplied the fire of spirit and wisdom, and Nature the heart and its holy affections, which soften and give a cheering glow to the former.

Love for his mother, and cheerful and affectionate regard for her precepts, is necessary for the more elevating and sublime love of his Father. (For if we love not the Creator's works which we have seen, how shall we love Him whom we have not seen?)

Yet shall the Father, and not the Mother, claim the loftiest portion or soul of their mutual child. He leaves her that which she supplied, viz. her child's inanimate body, which she afterwards hugs to her sorrowful breast in remembrance. Thus does the parting of soul and body take place—God claims the soul, and Nature takes the body, which she deposits in her ample treasury, as God's Stewards, till recalled for a nobler transformation.

Nature appears dead and inanimate to common eyes, yet shall she gradually, and step by step, through the medium of her children, doubtfully issue of the contest between spirit and matter,—of body and soul—when blended, and the finer and bolder development of spirit by such wrestling against corporal passions, which are to the soul, what gymnastics are to the body.—The fight of human against Divine will—of light against darkness—good against evil—God against Devil.

dren, fall into the halls of Divinity and Eternity—the last but not the least honoured guest of those immortal palaces.

'Tis thus then Man grounds his naturally engendered hope* and triumphantly waving standard of Immortality ;—that whereas God framed him in his own image, and placed him on the thitherto dead earth to cheer by his presence, and give life by his labours, to its previous mighty but inanimate bulk—he should, when such duty had been duly and lovingly performed, and her genial laws of love and benevolence been learnt, wend his way back, filled with her holy precepts (which he had likewise been sent to learn), to his Father's bosom, and be hailed as a loving and dutiful son.

Man was not planted on this beautiful world for his own pleasure merely, but as an object of interest to the Divinity,—a receiver of Nature's manifold bounty, which had else run to waste, and a developer (by contact with his fellows and stubborn matter) of his own nature, corporeal and spiritual.†

For God would not have created him for a merely selfish end, but for the good of the whole Universe, as every part, however minute serves, and fits in the great whole.

God sees and works not in parts and specks like man,—but knows how to fit in every portion of the huge moving framework of this stupendous Universe.

We will now give a slight sketch of a Thought Vision, as an explanation of and apology for the existence of Man and Nature.‡

* We say nothing here of divine revelation.

† And spiritual through the means of corporeal,—the latter being only the means to the former end.

‡ This is but a skeleton or germ of the idea we hope to develope more

In the boundless depths of Eternity—long ere the birth of Time—(Time commencing from when God first created individual lives apart from his own) the whole Universe existed in, and was the Deity.

The seeds of all the infinitely numberless and then undeveloped worlds of matter lay lifeless in that awful profundity. The germs of all that were, that are, or that will be, lay imbedded therein, but the fire of life lay dormant or was but a smouldering ember.

One mighty soul lay imprisoned in the walls of its own unity or totality. No outward proof, or token, of its innate boundless love and benevolence, could issue from it to benefit a separate being, for the soul of Deity was all that existed—it was the “All in all!”

Who can describe the awful and dense solitude of that one lone universal mind, or who tell the agony arising therefrom, and which in the end induced the first work of creation, or emanation, and final deliverance of such from his pregnant soul?

* * * * *

Suddenly a sparkling thought shot brilliantly across the universal mind! The idea of creating some beloved object dissevered and apart from its own entity, on whom it could pour out its fondness, began to swell, glow, and finally restore, its first brightness and sunny hopefulness!

Then began the innermost creative powers of the Eternal to unfold, and gradually from his central heart grew forth, and was finally dissevered therefrom, a glorious harvest of spiritual or angel forms!

fully in “The Enthusiast.” We wish this chapter at present to be but vague and suggestive.

Now were all the fertile streams of love unloosed, and his mighty heart began to beat with sympathetic fondness towards his children, which most glorious attribute had necessarily till then lay lifeless. All his latent powers were now boundlessly called forth in creating pleasures for his children.

He thus created the spiritual or angelic hosts as companions of, and ministers to, his beloved Son (who represents the living, creative, or active attribute of the Godhead, which attribute or faculty, having the fire of active life thrown into it, must develop and satisfy its powers by creating through the means of the body [or Father], as companions, or objects of interest, children on whom to bestow its kindly feelings and love. Love was the first cause of creation, and the Son of God the chief impeller and generator of the scheme*).

* * * * * * *

But as in the human mind, and within the bosom of long inertness, and calm content, a brood of restless, fiery-motivated, stinging ideas are gradually generated and nursed into active life, even as the still stagnant water generates its swarm of animalculæ, —ill formed and misshapen microscopic monsters, and every species of insect devilry, greedily devouring each other ;—so, gradually within the heart of Angelic love and supineness, sprang restless aspirations and mutinous fancies ;—then arose gradually but strongly a wish for independent action, apart, and away from the immediate presence of the all-sustaining Omnipotent.

* Since writing the above we have fallen upon the following text :—(God) “hath in these latter days spoken unto us by his son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, *by whom also he made the worlds.*”—Hebrews i. 2. Also many others to the same effect.—If Christ made the worlds then the mystery of His dying to save what He had created becomes more luminous !

Mutiny amongst the Angels !—A separate independent state of existence was demanded, and as a punishment granted. The cord of Paternal observance, protection, and restraint from evil devices was snapt, and innumerable as the star-crowds off flew the self-acting free-will'd spirits into space, from out the halo of God's spirit which is Heaven,—exulting in their new-found but dangerous gift of liberty,—the last and grandest, but alas ! the most fatal gift to the spirit world !

Thus voluntarily fell the Angel World from their first state of simple and God-sustained blessedness ;—from inactivity proceeded evil and foolish desires ; from the wild ferment of these, sprang self-pride ; and from self-pride, free-will was called rebelliously for, and as the medium of self-punishment,—self-inflicted, was granted.

Then fell away the blessed garments of spotless innocence, love, and humility, and lo ! then saw they the nakedness of their own powers and were ashamed. The garments of deceit and false appearance were woven, and donn'd. An inner hidden life of selfishness, and self-love sprang up as a natural defence against the unruly and ambitious desires of each other, and too late was the fearful gift of abandonment to self, found to be a deadly evil.

Still the great power and unrestrained action of a Spirit created direct from the Eternal's bosom, remained ; and as yet, conscious power, and unbounded freedom made their state endurable. Mountainous pride and self-isolation naturally followed, and made almost Gods, though fallen ones, of these lost but mighty Spirits.

But in the agony of that self-centred selfishness and isolation of being, many repented and besought their God to once more

lead them from their sorrowful land of repentance, through the gates of Oblivion, into their childlike state of innocent dependence,—when their Father was their all-in-all,—to the flowery fields of their spiritual infancy, and thus from the womb of agonized Repentance were they born again.

Let each man search his own heart for the existence therein and the truthfulness of this legend of the fall and flight of the Angels from their first state of blessedness in their heavenly infant home. Let him observe how the child of clay likewise leaves the paternal roof and the age of trusting innocence, and voyages afterwards on the troubled waves of the world, till the land of repentance is reached, on the other side of which, stands the father with his open arms to welcome the prodigal home!

Thus then fell myriads from the Angel World, yet was good to be deduced from evil!

Again the Stream of Eternity flowed on!

* * * * *

Then created He a race of humbler and more finite-moulded beings, the dwarfishness of whose self-emanating power should engrave the lesson and necessity of humility deeply upon their hearts, and lead them to look upon Him as their only Father, from whom love, light, and knowledge should flow, in proportion as true love and humility fitted each soul for their reception.

Thus, then, created He the beautiful world, and a noble yet confined residence for the soul of Man (his body), which soul, tied down to Time and matter, should feel the full force of its good or evil actions, the conscience being the accusing angel or revenger which he enclosed and intertwined with the spirit in its

clay walls ;—this near proximity and blending constituting its mighty power over the mind and its possessor's actions !

Thus leaving each spirit freely to develop itself by its own freewill ; scattering around profusely all beautiful symbols for the foundation of man's language ; and filling nature with benevolent and openly expressed (*i. e.* to the spiritual ear) promptings ; He left man to nobly develop his mental faculties, by learning with gratitude, and through the medium of deep attention and application, her mild and generous lessons : and to imbed the love and humility they taught in his soul, as the only true and stable foundation for a loftier development ! For behold how mighty and powerful Nature is, and yet how bountifully and cheerfully she deigns to clothe and feed man, or even the smallest animal, and to supply their humblest wants !

Here, then, we leave man for the present. We leave him in the morning of Time roving the gardens of infant Nature (or Paradise), listening to and almost adoring the mysterious yet then unknown spirit-language or meaning of the beauties surrounding him—or the impression made on his mind by those beauties—afterwards to take the vesture of words, and become the representatives of ideas.

The creation of this World and of man is a sublimely merciful scheme of the Deity, and is intended to teach man (for the sake of his eternal happiness), by continually contemplating its infinite variety, and his own semi-ignorance of its origin—except by revelation—the weakness and humble powers of his own soul (unaided by his God), its longings, and its real nature !

This is the purpose of Nature,—this is why man is nestled

on and chained for a time to her breast—till the vacancy, foolishness, and helplessness of his spirit's infancy shall be exchanged for the dawning wisdom and strength of its more mature age!

Let him look lovingly upon her beautiful and sympathetic face, and she will prove herself a dear mother—will fill his soul with love and serenity whilst with her—and will ever point, with her thousand silent yet eloquent fingers, to his Father in Heaven as the only true parent of his immortal soul,—and to the halls of Heaven as his only proper dwelling-place, when he departs from her humbler home of his infancy!

Thus, then, stands Nature as the kind mother and Preceptress of Man. She teaches him the healthy lesson of Industry, by the necessity of his labouring to produce more abundant gifts from her generous breast—the lesson of Love, by her own beauty and kindness—of humility, by the open example she sets him of her own—and restricts the hope of immortality which man has naturally implanted in him, thus:—that whereas if the material sun shone not upon her she would become dark and lifeless, so likewise if the spiritual Sun or Father of man shed not his light over his child's created, and *not* self-existent soul, it could not possibly exist, and would also become lost and dead.

Does she not, by her seasons, and her bright resurrection after lying in the dead, cold, arms of Winter, hint to man, her spiritual son, who is as the flower of her beauty, that he likewise shall rise again renovated and more glorious after the refreshing embrace of the wintry grave (even as the corn seed is more invigorated and strengthened by the coldness and snow of winter), and shall be received in the lovely and glowing arms of a spiritual Spring?

What ! shall the earth, that, by the fiat of God, engendered man, who, even in his material form, is her highest and most honoured development, still go on arraying herself, from year to year, from barren Winter to fruitful Autumn, in the gorgeous garments of life and beauty ? Shall the glittering stars and lovely moon go shining on, and pouring their silvery showers of light o'er the earth merely to beautify a huge sepulchre ? Or shall man, O ye glorious bodies ! who possesses a forming self-directing spirit, sink down into nothingness and heed no more your silent and overpowering beauty ? Shall the grave entomb his powerful soul, that scans ye all, tests your distances, and divines the laws by which ye are marshalled ? No ! we shout out here before ye glittering myriads of worlds, who are now looking down upon us, and defy ye to outshine the immortal soul of man. He is of Heaven, and from the Creator's hands as well as you, endowed with more glorious attributes, claiming a closer relationship with God, "formed in his own image," (which, however grand and beauteous, ye cannot boast !) and possessed of more penetrating, subtle, and far-reaching faculties ! Ye dart your light for a certain, almost immeasurable, but yet **FIXED** distance, but he darts his mind throughout the whole universe ! Ye are but the teachers of certain truths to man or the beings by whom ye are inhabited ; then why greater and more immortal than those ye serve. "Shall the servant be greater than his Lord ?"

Death, or rather Annihilation, what art thou, or who fears thee ? Not the man who feels his own salient and boundless soul within ! Back to thy tomb !—dare not to scare weak ignorant souls with thy oblivious shade ! We call upon God to annihilate thy false terrors ! Thou unsubstantial and unreal Fiend Shadow—away !



CHAPTER IX.

The Poet's Duty.

THE writing of that vision had much enlarged and distended the mind of Julian, for clusters of thoughts like constellations flashed their light through his excited mind, which were mostly too lofty to be hastily developed, and consequently are not here recorded.

He felt his love and reverence to God to be far deeper than when he commenced it, and he hoped that his readers might also imbibe a portion of the same holy feelings from its perusal. He knew it was far from perfect as a composition, and wished it to be merely suggestive to other minds of like elevating thoughts, which each might perchance find benefit from, by developing and resolving for himself.

He knew there were many minds that had soared far higher than his own, but he likewise felt there were far more who had not reached HIS height, and these it was he wished to inform, and these he wrote for !

Thus he avoided all abstract philosophical idioms, and confi-

dered his subject in a merely natural light. And as we are told that man was made in the express image of God, so he had endeavoured to explain the workings of Deity through the help of the most elevated and God-like natural feelings.

Night arrived—the last line was transcribed, and with his “Vision” he entered once more the happy home of his smiling friends.

He read it aloud; many suggestions were offered and taken, as to cutting away the wildest shoots, which might prove too mystical for the World at large; and he saw, as his observant eye occasionally scanned the listening group, that the end he aimed at was accomplished with THEM, for he perceived that his seeds of thought fell not upon rocky ground to wither and die, but that they would doubtless germinate and bring forth future fruit.

The shade of deep thought hung like the canopy of evening over the circle that night, till the first lulling, and then inspiring voice of music dissipated it. Julian at last felt the pressure lifted from his mind, and when the parting word was given, he was once again the same cheerful being as formerly.

That night as Julian walked through the silent moonlight, and trod the silvered earth, veined by the black shadowed fibres of the leafless trees, with the stars glistening through their lofty branches overhead, a deeper sense of the grandeur and expressiveness of Nature, joined with a more intense feeling of love and gratitude to his God and all his created works, filled his mind like a glowing golden haze, making his soul overflow with blessings and praise; and when he pressed his refreshing couch, his slumbers were visited by delicious visions and heavenly vistas.

A few nights afterwards produced the following slight sketch of the Poet's duty, as grounded upon the previous vision, and must be considered as a short supplementary chapter to it.

The Poet's Duty.

HAVING divined the relative position of Man and Nature, viz., that God has appointed her the first teacher or instructor of her son, and the engraver on his mind of certain fixed spiritual principles, taught through the medium of boldly-developed natural laws, and which she, by her long connection with him, stamps with ineffaceable distinctness on his mind, let us now proceed to point out the Poet's duty (who may be distinguished as her most loving, attentive, and aspiring child).

We have given several illustrations in proof of the position we have taken, viz., that the operations of Nature do shadow forth certain mental phases, and enable the mind of man to explain and develop its own meaning and workings, through the medium of such operations, and also of imagery founded on the natural forms and appearances, so suggestive of parallel thoughts, with which her spacious store-house teems.

The duty of the Poet, then, is this: Loving his mother deeply (for he cannot be a true poet otherwise), he must ever watch her expressive countenance attentively (for she looks to him as the interpreter of her silent language, without whose help she must ever remain dumb and unexplained), he must anticipate her most vaguely hinted promptings, and after assigning them their corresponding mental truths, he must express them in the forcible language of man, and familiarize him with them,

through the means of apt imagery, which, being drawn from the all-seen World of Matter, is readily understood by all.

Likewise must he so express every truth which he, through diligence, and "attentive and believing faculties," has learned from her. It is his duty to elevate Nature in the eyes of his fellow-men, by hailing her with all reverence as the immediate and loving minister of her Creator, and to crown her with honour in the eyes of her negligent sons, which shall prompt them to look further into her meanings.

By elevating her in their eyes, they will be more proud of her guardianship, more content with their lot whilst with her, and more thankful to her Creator, for the many blessings which she as his stewardess dispenses to mankind—this last being her highest achievement—the uniting of her son to his God, through the feeling of gratitude, for the many yet unostentatious blessings scattered around him through her agency, by his benevolent and loving Father.

All this is the Poet's duty, and he will never feel happy or contented with his works or self till he has done his best to perform it.

The Novelist may amuse mankind; the Philosopher, or Scientific savant, may instruct coldly; but the Poet must add to amusement and instruction, elevation and warmth of soul. He must rise from natural to spiritual truths; and from human instruction to divine! In fine, he must make the lovely Earth but as the floor of Heaven, and show that it is surrounded by the firmament of Divinity.

He must trace, as developed in the constant workings of the universe around, and the whole circle of events, past and present,

the gradual development of the Deity's designs, as seen glaffed therein, and then exprefs them, clothed in apt words or imagery, to his fellow-mortals.

The Poet's thoughts are imbedded in, and glitter through the firmament of imagery, as the ftars fwim in and dart their light through the depths of fpace; their lovely brightnefs and great loftinefs COMMANDING the attention and admiration of the World of Man!

The Poet muft ever feek after elevating all that is fallen or caft down! Wherever God's creating fingers have been at work there he muft fing the wonders they have wrought.

Laftly and chiefly, wherever he finds God has vouchsafed to reveal his will, or the arcana of Eternity and his own foul to man, with the deepeft fpirit of humility, and moft earneft fupplication to his Heavenly Father for affiftance, he muft ftudy them with all the earneftnefs that love, hope, and his longings after the *certain* immortality of the foul can give, and then prefent to the world in glowing language the happy and comforting refults of his deep refearches.

We will now go one ftap further, and give a favourite idea of our youth, viz. that the Poet will yet be the High Priest of Man; for he, and not cold-hearted and one-fided men, alone knows how to brim up all the many gloomy receffes of the human heart with love, hope, and joy!

Julian had certainly (as his friends remarked) taken a high ftand for the Poets, but he knew that the loftier the ftandard was pitched on the mountains of Pofy the greater would be the height to which they would afcend; and, though they never

might reach it, that it would keep their eyes strained heavenwards instead of letting them fall contentedly upon the lower regions of mind !

As in religion : how few can act up to its noble precepts, but the knowledge of them makes us discontented with that line of action which, before we were acquainted with them, we looked upon with pride.

As to his frequent mention of the stars, which his friends observed he seemed to have a violent passion for, Julian trusted that before any critical "Fadladeen" should raise his supercilious eyebrows and denounce their frequent introduction, he would remember that the "Realms of Poesy" would look extremely gloomy, unless they were lighted up by the smiling faces of such lovely maidens ! and also that he, Julian, threw down the gauntlet in defiance of any who should dare to slight or slander them.

A few nights afterwards produced the following chapter, showing how far the poets had performed their duty, and giving a partial sketch of the poetry of the World.



CHAPTER X.

A slight Review of past Poetry.

AND now, the Poet's duty having been ascertained, let us take a hasty glance at the Poets and Poetry of the Past! Let us see who have understood, and then endeavoured to execute their mission, and let us observe the effect the Christian revelation had on some of them, giving a vague idea of their proper sphere of action!

We shall see that most were content to throw mere flowers of graceful thought on the path of man, or to entwine the warm tendrils of love around his stubborn heart—all of which had, however, an elevating and beautifying influence on the human family, though in a lower degree than the works of the grand spiritual Masters of Song.

We take our first and firmest stand at the majestic base of the "Holy Bible;" and looking up with holy awe and reverence at its mighty and glorious edifice; its foundations rooted in, and striking from, the central heart of Nature; its sublimely beautiful architecture looming grandly and dim from its vast proportions

on our mental sight, and its towers and pinnacles soaring into the loftiest heavens; the starry thoughts of Heaven and Immortality glittering through and clustering about their open tracery;—we feel the spirit of deep devotion and humility filling our soul and bursting with ardour to express itself, in terms of deep thankfulness and praise to the Great and Divine Architect!

Shall we remain without this mighty and glorious dome, and not enter to hear the merciful and benevolent proclamations of God uttered by His ministers within its spacious courts, and chiefly by one bearing His own image—His own well-beloved Son, sent purposely to instruct as well as save poor ignorant mortals?

We do not quietly utter, but we shout out, that this is the most beautiful, the mightiest, and the only really divine poem extant, (though there are many called divine because grounded upon and taking their origin from it!) And we further say, that he who will ever become a true and far-seeing Poet, and consequently a great one, must enter with glad humility its walls, and seek diligently the explanation of its mysteries!

Where the grand Epics of Milton and Dante, or we may add the great works of all other poets massed together, have produced a deep effect on one mind, this has produced a far deeper on myriads!

Then why should the pigmy minds of the present day treat it with silence, or cover it with the foul, slimy, yet powerless venom of their unheeded contempt?

Myriads of greater men than ever they will be, loved it deeply, gladly spending their lives in studying it, and writing their thoughts relative to its deep meanings; having bequeathed to us, their degenerate successors, mountainous masses of written thought on its mysteries.

One division of this gloriously divine poem may be considered to have produced a far deeper, more salutary, and more lasting effect than all other poems, and we will add written books of any sort that the World ever saw, and there have been Alp-like heaps of such !

Passing over the truly great and poetic souls of Greece (Plato and others), and those of the gorgeously glowing Orient (whose works we are not yet sufficiently acquainted with), we will first take those poet friends of our youth upwards, whose works are founded on, and were intended to explain, the above-mentioned poem of God and Nature, and this will bring us to Milton, Dante, and latterly Pollok.

These three aimed at being the developers and expounders of the will of God as portrayed in his word.

Their great poems, though often vilely bitter in spirit, are rooted in and shoot from its revelations. They tried to give man the full circle of knowledge on divine lore, in an inviting form, and endeavoured to make clear the wonderful yet dimly understood works and will of God to man—to give him a comprehensive view of the workings of Deity and his attributes—and in fact, as one of them expresses it, “To justify the ways of God to man.”

These were themes that lay nearest to Man’s heart, and, being such, he eagerly grasped at them, was informed, raised, and elevated by their perusal ; and they, producing a deep impression on his mind, acted as a goad to future research, the result of which has often been blest by ultimate faith in God’s fatherly love and protection, and in the wonders of his revealed word.

Men first took up their works to be gratified with their beau-

ties as Poets, and afterwards esteemed them as Poet-Priests, and as the dearest friends of their previously twilight souls !

Thus, then, have this illustrious trio done much, enlightened many, and are entitled to the veneration of all. They passed many a weary day and anxious night, that they might instruct and guide their fellow-men to their eternal happiness, and they have received, are now receiving, and shall still receive, the richest coronals of well-merited fame ; having boldly attacked the highest bulwarks of mystery and entered the awful realms of Divinity.

Others have contented their less deep and aspiring minds with roaming through the valleys and flower-gardens, and dallying with the beauties of Nature. These last, however, were as the infant instructors or preceptors of the mind of man to guide the way, and enable him to understand and appreciate, through the medium of the love, simplicity, and humility they taught, the beauties and deep wisdom of those highest Masters of Song !

We will not here notice Klopstock and other German Poets of a lofty class, as the three we have mentioned are more generally known to English readers. The Trio already noticed will suffice as illustrations of the loftiest style of Poetry.

Now follow the bards who sang more immediately of the wonderful beauties of Nature.

The Grecian, the Latin, and the Italian Poets sought to explain, beautify, or elevate, in the eyes of their fellow-men, her mysterious beauty and grandeur—seeking oftentimes to establish a link between natural and spiritual operations ; or they sang of virtue and her own brilliant rewards, and endeavoured to incul-

cate, through the medium of their ideal heroes, nobility of soul and high moral principles—the loveliness of virtue, or the foul deformity of Vice.

Some sang the praises of great and noble men, of brave warriors, or of terrible battles, seeking to throw a bright halo of romance about glorious achievements ; each one striving in his own way to elevate the human mind by applauding brave or humane and generous actions, and by inculcating noble sentiments. Or they tried to soften and spiritualize the mind by their touching tales of sorrow and woe.

Others made Love, and some purely imaginative subjects, their theme ; each endeavouring in his own walk to contribute his mite towards the elevation or the softening, and consequent ennoblement, of the otherwise fierce aspirations and hot passions of mankind.

The influence their songs had over men, unaided by physical strength, taught the lesson of the vast superiority of mind over matter, and was a bold prophecy that the kingdom of mind would become far higher than that of matter or mere physical force, and would at some future period banish the useless Fiend of War and Bloodshed from the World.

We dart thus rapidly past the monument each true individual Poet raised to himself on the banks of Time, as they are clustered too thickly for a separate survey ; and their influence over their generations, and by them over ours (for all true teachings continually expand till they fill the World with light), is too palpable to need enforcement—the pages of history likewise attest the truth !

It is the aggregate and not the individual influence which we would here enforce.

In the poetry of France (with some bright exceptions) we see the attributed character of its people glassed. The light missiles of flippancy and wit are hurled at the loftiest and noblest subjects.

Voltaire and his sneering crew were not the least cause of the laxity of morals, depravity of heart, and shallowness of sentiment, which deluged that country during his life and after his death, and the waves of which we are sorry to observe are not yet broken ! They are blessed with some men of deeper souls and loftier sentiments now, whose teachings we hope will not be spilt upon barren soil.

The German school of Poetry possesses an almost absolute sway over that imaginative and poetic nation.

There, almost every man has the seeds of Poesy naturally implanted within him, or warmly appreciates those who have, and deeply venerates those who shine the brightest in their firmament of Poesy. Their bards are, in truth, their lawgivers, or the tacit moulders, by their widely-diffeminated thoughts, of each new-moulded law ; and this accounts greatly for their noble, patriotic, and philanthropic spirit as a nation.

We say boldly there are more pure hearts and aspiring souls in Germany alone, than in almost all Europe put together, and their poets have done much in fostering this noble pre-eminence !

It is well known the influence the early bards of Scotland, Wales, and the warm-hearted Erin had over their children, and also the enthusiastic glow for noble achievements that the troubadours excited in the breasts of the Crusaders ! We need not say anything of the Scandinavian, and early Nations of Northern down to Southern Europe, nor yet of the wild Indian, or other savage nations—let the history of the world bear record !

Throughout the realms of Time, wherever the bard has appeared, there light, life, and beauty have sprung around his footsteps!

And now coming to our own country, we ask, has not Britain been elevated internally and externally by her Poet sons? Have they not thrown life and beauty over objects that had else remained dark and forgotten? Have they not warmed and elevated, by their immortal works, the hearts of their fellow-countrymen,—given fire to the zeal of the patriot, and religious fervour to the priest? Have they not (with some few exceptions) almost deified the noble attributes of Love, purity of Heart, and Pity, and inculcated the duty of universal kindness and sympathy to all the wretched and unfortunate portion of mankind?

All will agree that this has been done to a great extent, and that the hue of their Poets' thoughts has gradually blended with their own, and that they have contributed largely by their noble aspirations to the moral, and, by the moral, to the national grandeur of their country.

We add no more to this rapid and flight sketch of the Poet's mighty influence, as it is too widely admitted to need further comment or illustration!

The fine fable of the power of Orpheus, in the Grecian mythology, is one of the truest in that deep-meaning assemblage of mystically-expressed axioms.

Wherever an Orpheus has sprung up, there has he never failed in melting and giving life to the stony hearts of men, and in making them deeply sensitive to noble impressions!



CHAPTER XI.

DOUBTLESS our readers, like ourselves, are fatigued with their long march through “The Realms of Poesy,” let us therefore take another slight détour into the realms of Reality ere we come to the conclusion of our journey, the terminus of which, we think, will be found in the next chapter. So now we have caught a cheering glimpse of our goal, we shout out the title of our work, and dash forwards with hope.

A foiled Ascent.

DEEP and over-ardent thought had thrown Julian into one of his occasional wild fits; and though the day was far spent and the night approaching, he determined to scale Manger-ton alone, and there enjoy his meditations in the dense solitude of mountain darkness.

He had toiled far up the difficult heights, in a state of oblivious reverie, when the previously drizzling rain was superseded by a storm of sleet driven before the fierce mountain winds, that

rushed down like a pack of howling demons to devastate the world below. This awoke him from his dreamy state, and his soul grew hot as he goaded his horse, clove their angry troops, and set their fury at defiance.

Darkness now hid the uncertain and dangerous path ; his horse was nearly exhausted ; dangerous rocks, bogs, and funken hollows lay thickly on all sides, and feeling more pity for the poor beast he bestrode than fear for his own neck, he availed himself of a poor ragged lad's services, who had seen him ascending, and who had followed in the hope of acting as guide (with which title he honoured himself) to conduct him safely back.

Seeing a wreath of smoke arise from amidst the thickly-studded masses of huge broken stone, which appeared as though this had been the field of a fierce battle between the fabled Titans of eld, and having ascertained that it arose from the cabin of the far-renowned Sir Richard Courtney, Knight of Mangerton, &c. he dismounted, and throwing the reins to his little attendant, stumbled down to the squalid and half-hidden cabin of this noted guide.

Having entered, and introduced himself as a stranger who having heard of his fame wished to visit him, the poor fellow, who was suffering under some severe disease of the lungs—"consumption," as *he* termed it—and lay stretched on a miserable pallet, bid him in the most solemn manner, "Welcome to the home of Sir Richard Courtney."

The cabin apparently consisted but of one room, as is usual in the huts of the Irish peasantry ; the floor was of uneven earth, and fowls strutted about and claimed their right of residence together with the wretched little children. A turf fire threw its

fitful light from the grateless hearth, and almost stifled Julian with its smoke, so that he was long ere he could discern the features of the strange being before him.

The strangely confused conversation which ensued wound about like the meanderings of a mazy brooklet, touching many points, but resting at none. It was a curious adventure for Julian:—the winds roaring down that bleak mountain—black darkness without, and gloom within, and that uneducated man pouring forth his strange fancies on a confused heap of high and low topics. Now he spoke of Michael and the Angels, and losing himself in the mist of his too lofty theme—(which Julian thought long connection with the high mountains above them had given him an interest in)—and then tumbling straight to earth, and almost in the same breath, giving his criticisms, eulogistic or satirical, on the numerous visitors who secured his services during the “saason time.” Then followed inquiries after Sir John Franklin, and a display of his geographical knowledge was thus introduced; and afterwards many inquiries after English people who had been his friends; and here let us tell those who knew this poor man, and who took an interest in him, that their names were not forgotten when he poured out his streams of gratitude to Julian’s ear.

He spoke also of having the Bible in his possession, and appeared to esteem it as the greatest treasure in his humble home, wishing to produce it as a proof of his wealth; which Julian, when surveying the miserable place, thought was the only wealth of which he COULD boast. He said that a certain lady had sent him a Testament, the print of which was, however, too small—(his droll letter of application for it, which we have been

avored with, being copied below*)—that the one produced was given him afterwards by a kind “gentleman” who visited him; and that the messenger by whom he returned the first copy retained it, which proves that these poor people, though it is said that their priests forbid their possession of the Bible, have a wish to study it for themselves; and cursed be any system which prevents the free development of the mind, and clamps the book of life with clasps of iron!

The possession of this, Julian could plainly see, gave the interest on religious subjects which Sir Richard evinced, and accounted for his vague, but suggestive remarks, on Michael and the Angels.

Ere leaving the cabin, the poor man, in the most pompous manner, requested Julian to inform Mr. and Mrs. Hall, on his return to England, if he ever saw them, that he “had the HONOR of visiting Sir Richard Courtney,” who sent his blessings and thanks for their kindness, and that he said they were his best and truest friends.

* “This comes from Sir Richard Courtney, Knight of Mangerton.

“Dear and honored Lady,

“I take this opportunity of sending these few lines, being laid on the flat of my back, and greatly *troubled* with a *consumption* of the lungs and *Rumatique* asthma, to say nothing of a *waking fever* bringing one very low, which is the *raison* of making *bould* to ask your honor for the loan of a Bible, by the bearer, my little son, that I may read it to my little childre in my little cabin, on the But of

“MANGERTON.”

This sketch of a poor Irishman will show how, though miserably poor in circumstances, they are millionaires in dignity and self-esteem. The poorest wretch generally claims descent from some king, prince, or chieftain, and their ready wit, natural politeness, and hatred to restraint seem to bear out the assumption.

Little did Julian think when he dashed homewards that evening, after promising a second visit, that the soul of poor Sir Richard would, in one short week from that time, be floating away to the spirit-land, and that his body would be laid beneath the shade of that ruined abbey (Mucrofs) he had shown to so many thousand travellers !

This, alas ! Julian is sorry to record, was the fact !

We have introduced this slight sketch chiefly for the purpose of informing the thousands who have enjoyed his company and services that their former amusing guide is no more !*

* We cannot omit returning, at so convenient an opportunity, our most unbounded thanks to Mrs. S. C. Hall, for the delight her elegant "Midsummer Eve's Tale" (presented to us by a deeply-admired friend) afforded us, and which first inspired the ardent desire to visit this lovely, and to us beloved spot, and without which visit this work had not been written.





CHAPTER XII.

*Why should not this age become the richest Flower-Garden of
Poesie?*

THE answer of the World to the above question will be,—“ We see no reason, but every reason why it should become so.”

Still she demands, as the Poets of her choice, such as shall enter thoroughly into her aspiring spirit,—not those who shelter their fame under the coverts of valley flowers, or who anchor their skiffs in the rivulets of Time, but such as shall wave their floating standards on the mountains of Mind, and sailing the oceans of Infinity and Eternity, shall bring from beyond their shores rich freights of golden fruity thoughts!

The World Spirit is not now moved by elegies on dead donkeys, quartos of love ditties, and cataracts of wordy tears shed over the urn of the past. Her motto is,

“ Let the dead Past bury its dead!”

and she points with firm finger to the glorious dawning Sun of Futurity.

She now scorns the spiteful misanthropic musings of selfish and disappointed poets, who pour in revenge their corroding streams of sarcasm and taunt over the hopeful Present and Future, and who in fact set up *their* puny statues in opposition to the gradually developing schemes of our glorious God and Father of all.

What is in the womb of the pregnant Future we know not; but this we do know,—that He who is the mighty moulder of events, and is the dear Father of all his loving children, will not forsake those whom He of his own will begat, and whom, as such Father, we feel it is his beloved DUTY to protect.

The world, then, requires bards or prophets of the Future, not snuffing lugubrious whiners over the hearse of the Past; and when such appear, and not till then, will she give ear to her Poet sons: she has lived too long to listen to false prophets, or to such as lower or betray their high and divine trust and charge.

A Poet's soul is the emblem of Immortality! He is the child of Aspiration and Hope, and if his works point not ever upwards, like the spire of the humblest village fane, then let him pour out his poetic gutter streams (and fluids ever seek their own levels) to crawling worms, snakes, and serpentry, that drag their slimy length over, and make their unclean nests in, the otherwise beautiful human world.

He whose finger is ever pointed to the hopeful Heavens, and who descends to Earth merely for symbols to express in the universal well-known language of Nature his lofty thoughts—he, and he only, shall the world look up to with loving eyes, and hail him as her best-beloved son.

Let not the Poet trouble himself too much with trying to elevate and spiritualize the World through the medium of sorrow

and woe, as all feel, alas ! their keen sting in reality ; and fictitious woes, however forcibly depicted, seldom produce the effect intended ! Hope is also more powerful than Sorrow—for sorrow killeth, but hope giveth life and vigour !

Stand fast, then, ye embryo Poets ! Be not over anxious ! Wait till, by long meditation, and holy, lofty thought, God shall give you like lofty powers of expression, and constitute you his teacher sons !

Let your hearts move on the earth, and in its best interests,—and let your minds roam through, and gather grandeur in the boundless halls of Infinity and Heaven !

And now, oh ye children of Song, ye bright band of living Poets !—ye whose fruit is already ripened and partly gathered !—and ye whose blossoms are just expanding (having divined the answer of the world to our question) !—we now ask why ye should not become such beloved sons, when she calls so loudly for your appearance ? Or why waste your time in unmanly wailings over individual troubles, which God has seen proper to inflict, when ye may be giving voice to the mighty aspirations and longings of the great human family ?

Shall the present wondrous age go down to posterity unfung—a mere blank in history ?—for ye are the real chroniclers and historians of the World.

History is but a cold registrar of events,—often a mere automaton, but ye are they who throw life and a living soul into them ; who show the causes and partly-hidden roots from whence they spring, and throw around them a bright halo which shall glow through the hazy firmament of the Past.

Suffer not, then, private sorrow, nor yet the Delilah-like temp-

tations of the world, to have your locks of strength, and then deliver you helpless to have your far-seeing eyes torn out ; but come, crowned with all your majestic and manly vigour, to battle with those dark and powerful Philistines, the hosts of Ignorance and Wrong, who are ever seeking to conquer and then murder the noble bands of Right, Religion, and Purity—that glorious Angel-trio, sent by God to wage war with and finally root out from the Earth the baneful progeny of their black and hateful foes !

The World will then receive you with open arms. The critics (thanks be to God !) are no longer the malignant satirists of pure aspiring minds, but the fathers and kind advisers of all such as possess the “ inherent glow,” and ardently wish and strive for the enlightenment and happiness of all mankind !

She will deeply thank and offer up prayers for you, if with God’s assistance and blessing you cut away, or but partly remove, the virulent cancer from her aching breast !

Come forth clothed in every shred of mental majesty, bestowed upon you as a favoured gift by God ; and then not merely the fading wreaths of this world’s so-called Immortality shall be yours, but the glorious and fadeless coronals of a heavenly Immortality bestowed by God’s own hands shall be seen encircling your honoured brows in the palaces of Heaven and Eternity !

We fear not the laugh of true poets at these our warmly expressed thoughts and aspirations after a higher place of honour and usefulness, to which they may ascend, than those of the past.

But should any feel inclined to sneer, let us tell such, that did we think it necessary or manly to take up and use the bitter weapons of irony, perchance we might find some such in *OUR* armory equally, if not more sharp and gleaming than theirs, and

prove, when Time has taken a few more strides, that they were wielded by, and proceeded from, a soul quite as mighty and deep as their own !

This, however, we fear not, for each pure crystal star hails with delight another newly-risen sister as her companion through the otherwise black realms of night, and an assistant in throwing light over the dark world of man !





CONCLUSION.

JULIAN had at last completed his wanderings through the flowery realms of Poesy. Many a night of anxious meditation had floated away silently before the footsteps of morning, and many a germ of noble thought had been suggested for future development during those solemn vigils.

He would fain have added much more about the lovely locality in which his work had been produced. How with a noble-hearted young friend he had pierced through the frowning and grand gap of Dunloe, and in shooting the dangerous Weir bridge the rudder had broken at the most critical period, and they had yet escaped unharmed. How the old family carriage was often put in requisition, and he and his "fayre ladye" friends had driven through the most enchanting scenes; and how with another strange friend he had been to trace the authenticity of an almost forgotten legend, and to visit the wild glen in which the occurrence took place, with many other adventures. But he feared the direct object of his work would have suffered from the admixture of too much narrative.

A few days after the completion of his work—having shaken off the gloom which enwrapped him and poisoned his existence when he first arrived—loaded with blessings, he, with tearful eyes for those beloved friends and scenes he left behind, set sail for his native land. But before leaving, flowed forth the three following farewells:—

FAREWELL !

To the World.

AND now, O World ! we shake thy warm hand with a feeling of pure friendship, and say Adieu ! we hope only for a short time, and though, perchance,

“ It may be for years,
And it may be for ever,”

still, if so, say we part on good terms : thou wilt not forget thy warm-hearted son, who threw at thy feet his best wishes,—hailed thee with eager love,—and showered over thee his warmest blessings, ere he plumed his wings for the more genial climate of Heaven !

Such as he had, that he hopes he has given thee without reserve or fear of rebuff ; and “ Though poor the offering be,” he knows thou wilt not altogether reject it !

If thou hast—though with tears for their donors—accepted corroding and burning gifts of hate and misanthropy, why shouldst thou refuse those of soothing love, and genuine (but not CANTING) philanthropy ?

His heart is deeply interested in the welfare of the whole human family, and he has not used kind words for his own

emolument, as he hopes his aims are far higher ! He is also far from fearing thee, O World ! but he wishes to DESERVE thy love ; and he only seeks, and with God's blessing ever will seek, the universal good and the enlightenment and ennobling of all.

Censure or praise falls alike harmless over such as feel they have dared to be true to the promptings of their own aspiring souls !

Farewell, and may that glorious God who is above all, and created all, prosper and give root to any seeds of good (if such there be) in this little work ; and should there be any seeds of evil may He frost and blast them ere they germinate !

Farewell ! and may God pour his richest and most soothing blessings o'er us all !

To Killarney and my Mountain Friends !

FROM a solitary life on the wild sea shore, and a subsequent roving on the banks of the nobly-flowing Rhine, I came to thee, O thou laughing speck in the beauteous eye of Erin !

With what rapture have I watched the alternately frowning majesty or smiling beauty of my beloved mother Nature's expressive countenance ! With what wild pleasure have I listened to and beheld the shrieking storms, that torture but refresh the bosom of the Mighty Ocean !—the crashing thunder rattling along its lone and lofty cliffs, and the fierce glare of the cleaving lightning !—the beauty of moon or the silent majesty of star-light, when night and slumber had steeped mankind in oblivion !

How many a Sun have I seen set gorgeously, and kept my sleepless vigil till it again rose brilliantly, as if refreshed, from the Ocean ;—till Time appeared as though merged in Eternity, and myself floundering in its shoreless ocean !

Yet deep thought, though plumed with the glittering wings of Imagination, brought not back on her pinions from the distant shores to which she travelled, pure joy or comfort, but became at last as a clinging demon, pursuing me at all times, and in all places, till I became

“ Weary, gloomy, restless, and forlorn ! ”

Such was my state of mind ere visiting this lovely Paradise, upon which all that Nature, with her boundless wealth and profusion of life, could bestow, she has lavishly poured out.

Lakes, mountains, forests, streams, waterfalls, and fairy islands, —the earth bursting with fanciful herbage and lovely flowers,—and all marshalled under the waving banners of the variously-dyed foliage !—surely these were sufficient in themselves to give second life and youthfulness to my fevered mind !

These did much, but the sympathetic hearts and pure minds God sent to bless me with their intercourse gave to the passive beauties around a more cheerful and hopeful glow, and softened my mind to receive more deeply their delightful impressions !

Though Thought has not yet forsaken me, her lacerating fangs have been extracted, and her demon form is softening and fading into that of a hopeful-eyed angel. The black skirts of the clouds of misanthropy have almost disappeared below the horizon, and the sympathy and religious feeling of my smiling friends (though before perfect strangers) have thawed the ice of bitterness and hatred, and saved me from an early grave.

Adieu to thee, thou earthly heaven ! and mayest thou afford to all parched souls, who seek thy cheering face, the refreshing balm thou hast showered over mine !

My beloved mountain friends ! A more bitterly-felt farewell I waft to you ! Never will you regret the kindness lavished on my unworthy self : you have opened the door of friendship to the heartfick stranger, bound up the sores of a wounded soul, and poured therein the oil and wine of Christian love and peace, nor will my blessed Heavenly Father (the only Father's care I ever knew) let you go unrewarded !

Perchance my path is through troubled waters, or over the cold mountain peaks of mind ! or perchance even now my days are almost numbered !

If I live I WILL not be soon forgotten either by the world or you ; and if I die I shall carry the memory of the many happy hours we have spent together with me to Heaven, to console me till, one by one, you drop into its halls, and we join in a more blessed and lofty communion !

God bless and prosper you all ! *

* After several months' travelling, I visited Ireland, and came to these lovely lakes, my purse being nearly exhausted. When I arrived at the "Lake Hotel," which was a short time back a private mansion, and still resembles one, I sent for the proprietor, and asked him if (though a stranger) he would confide in my honour should I leave before a remittance arrived from England ?

He immediately replied, that he should be most happy to serve me in any way.

Though I proposed stopping only three or four days, I have remained three months, during which time I have received the greatest civility and kind attention, which the Irish, above any nation, can most delicately afford.

All who wish for a delightful, quiet, and romantic residence, when visiting these lovely lakes, will thank me for recommending them to Mr. Cotter, and if they will further ask for my old favourite attendant, John, they will find every little want anticipated !

To my Work.

AND now, O thou dear little work of my heart! go forth from the warm nest of thy infancy, but ere thou leavest my hands to meet (perchance) the cold glance of strangers, let me bless and bid thee God speed! and give thee a warm and affectionate "farewell!"

We fear not but that thou wilt find some, if not many, who will take and treat thee kindly! Not perhaps for the wisdom, if any such there be, enshrined in thy pages, but for thy youthful promise of a fuller, nobler, and more manly development of thy owner's powers, and the love which over-canopies thee!

And here, before the parting seal be given, let us indulge in a little egotism as a slight explanation, and justification, of thy author.

From a boy, Julian, or Alastor (for they are different cognomens of the same person), possessed deep-felt, though unuttered aspirations and longings for the happiness of the whole human family, that only true happiness arising from the love of God and man, which duties, if lovingly performed, would bring down rich streams of Heaven even upon Earth!

But lo! he was thrown into the vortex of the World, or rather he was placed in such a position, that he could see and observe calmly the rapid whirl of that fearful Charybdis!

His heart sickened and hope almost expired, when he beheld the shattered wrecks of the loftiest human hopes and interests, and the lifeless bodies of the fair Angels of good, dashed, whirled with contempt, treated as vile weeds, and finally engulfed in its profoundly dismal demon jaws!

None knew the agony of his soul at this spectacle!—his heart fainted, and almost became the prey of dark Despair.

He withdrew with hasty footsteps, as soon as he could break the chains that confined him to his horrid rock of observation; and left the world of man, as he then hoped, for ever, wishing to become a simple child of Nature, and to live and die in the contemplation of her majestic beauties!

But He who will not forsake those who look up to Him with tearful eyes of supplication for aid and protection, again brought him as if led by blind chance, (for God parades not his gifts like man!) to a cheerful and sunny Isle of pure and religious friendship. His soul then again rose, shook off her torpor, and began to arm herself with the armour of strength, and those weapons of love which might conquer the World-fiend by their pliancy.

Had not this been so appointed, he would have doubtless made a bold, bitter, and uncompromising attack upon the “Vile World” which, alas! but too often serves to increase the virulence of her evil passions!

May God give him strength to carry on the good fight of faith and love, and prevent him ever again wasting his strength in vain repinings, or contempt of that World which love may yet convert into a friend worthy of his warmest esteem!

And now let us tell those who might have misunderstood or under-rated his aims, whilst in the World, and alternately floundering in the abyss of Melancholy (or leaping goat-like from peak to peak of the highest Mountains of Hope), that most of the thoughts, and all the aspirations, embalmed in these pages were THEN his, and that his indolence was not so great as they might have imagined!

A noble-hearted and affectionate sister alone knew his early aspirations, and was joined at a later period by one whose kindness to and appreciation of him, taught him to regard her as a mother.

These, and these alone, knew vaguely that which lay nearest his heart, and to these he appeals as witnesses of the truthfulness and reality of his feelings and sentiments, as expressed in this little work !

Go forth, then, ye pages of my heart, and may God bless and prosper ye !





SUPPLEMENTARY.

THUS ended “the murmuring, glowing, meandering, earnest little book,” as a great living Critic has kindly termed it. They who have learned to look with interest on Julian’s footsteps and opinions can accompany him again through a short tract of supplement, in which he will guide them rapidly beneath the magic porch of Imagination;—into the crypts of the Past;—through the land of the Present;—into the mists of the Future.

Homewards Bound.

BITTER is the parting word even to partial friends, but how trebly so when tremblingly, lingeringly, uttered, to those who have entered into and warmed with their genial presence the sanctuary of our inmost hearts!

Thus Night was hastening away into the past Eternity when Julian lingeringly turned from the warm home of his beloved friends, and felt “thoughts too deep for tears” rush with raven wings through his gloomy soul!

The Sun arose,—glanced his quivering diamond shafts athwart

the trembling lakes, and lit the misty chasms of the cloud-wreathed mountains. A sad passing gaze at the wood-embowered home of his heart, a tacit blessing on its beloved inmates, and it sank from his view, perchance, he then thought, for ever !

For many a mile did he glance back on that fast-receding Eden where his soul had once more drunk in youthful peace and innocence. The wooded hill had long disappeared, but still did the lofty cone-summit of the Torc mountain point its locality. Gradually, faintly, flickeringly, at last it also disappeared through his tearful eyes, and with a wild start he awoke from his gloomy reverie with his stern purpose to do or die, as his restless companion.

He saw the morrow's sun rise grandly over a sleeping Capital :—he dashed across the dissevering sea :—flew on the rushing wings of steam through the wildly beautiful scenery of North Wales ;—then arose the fretful sweltering towns of manufacturing England, dotting her broad breast of richly wooded green ;—and Night ushered him into the vast Maelstrom of competition, —boundless wealth and deathly poverty, —loftiest knowledge and deepest ignorance, ambition, crime and disease—that human whirlpool,—London !

Julian loved it not, so swept swiftly away to his own romantic and beloved little bay by the eternal-voiced ocean, which he hailed with the eager delight of a long-absent son ;—for most filially did he love that hoarsely-grand old Ocean whose organ notes of mystic grandeur had ever spoken such rapture to his bounding freedom-loving soul. Nor was human sympathy absent from this meeting, for the warm grasp of many a poor seaman welcomed the young hermit home.

We fear not, but love to detail the true wanderings, bodily and mental, of an ardent soul, to show that in a so-called profane age, where Society has levelled many of the mountains of Aspiration, and silenced with her frown the voice of many a generous but weak soul, who hated her despotism, as also that of her darling bantling Opinion,—that fiery young souls are not wanting to speak boldly their sentiments,—to censure what they see is base whether in king or peasant,—to hurl the firebrands of defiance into the foul dens of Priestcraft, Selfishness, and Hypocrisy,—who still see Life through a poetical and romantic medium, and though the World be grey with crime and tyranny, that the fresh breezes of Paradise still play about its solitary spots, where the voice of Patriarchal hospitality, still welcomes the wandering stranger.

We now give the result of one of Julian's frequent Night vigils, and a sketch of his seaside hermitage.

A Seaside Vigil.

NIGHT had laid her cool hand over the feverish brow of the sleeping World, and visions floated through the chamber'd minds of myriads.

But in a darkly draped study, piled with the glorious works of the "great departed," grotesquely furnished, and adorned profusely with works of art, and fanciful tufts of feathery grasses with wild flowers intermixt, and envased, thoughtfully sat Julian with lamp extinguished. The fitful firelight glanced on the dark

curtain-folds, and quaint oaken tables, occasionally revealing the golden title of some departed Poet's or Philosopher's lore. Through his opened lattice came the mystic voice of the mighty ocean with its murmurous notes of deep-toned melody. High in the lofty heavens cinctured with pearly cloud-wreaths floated the vestal moon.—Far over the blue waters glittered her quivering path of heaving silver, over which an occasional white-wing'd vessel slowly sailed like a fairy bark, bearing its happy freight of homebound hearts, and wealthy merchandise from distant lands, to pour into the absorbing heart of the vast City to which they slowly wended. Over the dim western waves fitfully glanced, like a wavering hope, the revolving beacon of a foreign land, and nearer over the eastern tide glared the red light of the warning light-ship moored near the deadly Goodwin quicksands, in which, how many a brave heart, and gallant vessel, lie deeply ingraved till the upheaving day of doom!

Many a night had Julian gazed with solemn ecstasy on this glorious scene; and many a mystic meaning had slowly globed itself out from his thought-chaos, whilst dreamily surveying its beauties. A few faint stars now, like sickly fireflies floated in the light-blue boundless ether, and filled up the natural chalice of beauty.

And gazing dreamily on that solemn vision of beauty, and those earnest gull-like vessels, the golden gates of Imagination rolled back, and Julian passed through into the vast realms of mind. And lo! rich freighted ideas came sailing out of the circumambient gloom over the ocean of thought, and dancing athwart the silver path of intense scrutiny, and observation, again glode into surrounding darkness,—even as he had just observed

those material barks float over the moon-silvered path of the ocean, on whose shores he now thoughtfully reclined;—the sketches of which floating thoughts will be found pictured forth below.

The Caves of Phantasy.

I PASS through the dim vast caves of Phantasy into the Crypts of the Past, filled with the floating images and sounds of past events. Sounds of muffled discord swell mournfully throughout the awful shades. I hear the loud angel-anthem swelling through boundless space on the re-creation of the World and the marriage of spirit with matter, in the form of the first man;—then follows their woful plaint o'er his fall from innocence. I hear the simple chant of the Patriarchs hymning their gratitude to the watchful protector of their herds and homes, mingled with the riant sounds of Godless mirth and blasphemy. Then arises the awful crash of a deluged World, the whirlwind shrieks of drowning myriads, succeeded by the sluggish splash of the sinking waves. The fresh silvery pæan of the forewarned and God-saved man and his family cleaves the again-smiling face of Heaven. Follow,—the happy songs and mirthful sounds of patriarchal times, fading away into the ambitious war cries of rising Nations, and the fearful mysterious chanting to animal gods in the subterranean caves of the Egyptian Priesthood, succeeded by the long loud agonized cry of bondaged Israel, then arises their exulting hymn of deliverance on the Red-sea shore, followed by the hoarsely mutinous murmurs of groaning years.

* * * * *

Now arises the Avalanche crash of falling kingdoms and empires, the heaving death-groans of murdered myriads, the sluggish gurgle of the vast oriental sea of blood. The tempest-shrieks of human victims as they pour their unwilling blood on the altars of demon gods accurst, and finally black, dense, religious darkness englooms the world of man.

* * * * *

Faintly but increasingly arises the hum of polished cities, and the melodious, bloodless but sensual rites, of mythic Gods ;—follows, the low sapping of false creeds by the still small waves of Truth, gradually increasing their roar through the cities of enlightened Greece, till an orient star hovers o'er Palestine, and the jubilant song of Earth's Guardian Angels echoes through space at the birth of the Man-God.—A pause.

* * * * *

Again the fearful yells of mangled martyrs rising fuller and louder, till agony has boldly dared to mate with the mild spirit of Christianity ;—then comes the crash of ancient empires, and the struggling birth-throes of infant kingdoms. The stream of Christianity though blocked with the savage rocks of olden creeds, stern prejudices, and tyrannous oppression, has dashed and crept through all ;—for truth, like water *must* find its own level,—and now has poured its rich fertilizing floods through the hearts of Nations.—Christian songs of triumphant joy I hear cleaving through the vaulted centuries, which alas ! gradually swell into the gorgeous sensualized chants of Priestly Rome. Then is the garment of simplicity torn away, and the gorgeously embroidered robes of ceremonial, and unspiritualized forms are heaped upon

the fainting form of Christianity. The sounds of simple earnestness and confiding love fade away into the long loud exultant chant of Priestly Rome and Spiritual Anarchy. Like Prometheus of old, the Popes now seize the keys of Heaven, or rather, wheedle poor St. Peter out of them, and open the doors only to whom they list; a weighty toll being demanded from each traveller who would pass through.

* * * * * *

Europe now supplants Asia, and takes the reins of advancement from her. Christianity though damm'd up by the floodgates of Popery, still pours thin crystal streams therethrough, which stream through the souls of Eremites, and persecuted sects of holy men. The Warfiend contrives to mate with the name of Christianity in the "Holy Wars" (lyingly so called), and is rebuked by severe defeat for the blasphemy.

The hum of mercantile cities mingles now with the groans of the bulk of mankind, oppressed by a barbarous feudalism, and often does the serf believe God to be only the ally of the rich and powerful.

* * * * * *

Again the cries of martyrdom rise higher, for Rome is powerful, and has many cruel allies. The groans of victims coldly and canonically murdered for the blessed love of Christ, go up to the throne of God,—who hears their piteous plaint and sends a blessed Reformation to loose the spiritual bonds of the enslaved nations.

Suddenly the strong but long-pent stream of civilization is unloosed and pours its dashing, refreshing waters through the World. The broad banner of Advancement is unloosed to the winds,

and freedom, spiritual and temporal, spreads like morning over the Earth. Down,—down, fiercely rushing and gushing, come the streams of Civilization, Industry, Political Brotherhood, and Freedom, adown the clefts of the remaining centuries, till they burst into the sea of World-Industry, Peace and Practical Christianity, now dashing beneath the vast dome of that pure Palace of Crystal, standing in the capital of our own beloved Isle.

The visionary clouds rolled away, and the low dash of waves again poured refreshfully through Julian's ear, but again they rolled back through the deep vault of thought and disclosed,

The Land of the Present.

FROM roaming the dim Vaults of the Past, I slowly ascend to the broad sunlit realms of the Present, and observe the events, (or the opinions which are the souls thereof,) stalking through its varied landscape of mottled sunlight and shadow.

In the far distance I descry the diseased forms of aged Creeds, Beliefs, and Opinions, faintly tottering and panting onwards towards yon far-seen Canaan of the Future, whose beauties loom faintly through the misty distance,—which many of them, thank Heaven! shall never reach, nor can ANY without a new influx of healthy youthful life, which the strengthening aliments of Earnestness, Charity, Disinterestedness, and Iron-faith, alone can yield, for want of which the religious world has long famished.

I see the prostrate, but patient form of Godlike Christianity, chained on the rocky mountain of Formalism to which the demons Selfishness and Apathy have chained him, whilst the greedy vul-

ture—Priestcraft, (their ravenous hungry-eyed bantling,) gorges upon his bleeding heart.

But I also faintly discern the armed hand of God coming through the mist of the Future, to smite the vulture; cleave the chain; and set the noble captive free into the human world, there to diffuse the fire of light and love he brought from Heaven.

I see vast multitudes of mortals gazing into the blank air of mind, vainly endeavouring to discern through the zenith of their souls, the dazzling throne of the God they are imperfectly taught to worship, and seeing it not, despair:—who look doubtfully into some inane realm of speculative thought, and still see nought but uncertain light. They see not that His spirit glances from beneath every grand, or simple phase of Nature surrounding them, and is the moving soul of the natural blessings poured over them. He is isolated from his own house of Creation, and from some unimaginable distance sits calmly contemplating the actions of mankind, —condemning or rewarding; and sympathising but little with his poor tempted children of clay. God to many is but a vague sound, an abstract word, which he who invokes ofteneft, cares and knows least of:—a vague mist or cobweb of abstract uncomprehended attributes, which the first strong-buzzing doubt shall break through, or tear:—who look upon the World as infinitely distant from heaven and the immediate presence of God, however they may pretend otherwise:—who see not that the Universe is but the one grand temple of God, in which all souls may worship the good, the true and the beautiful thus displayed outwardly;—which worship leads to, yea, is, the love of Him who is the consummated flower or perfection of all these!—God wants not worship, unless it be love-worship! God

IS NOT a vain earthly-minded monarch who loves servile laudation and obedience because he is all-great and powerful ; but because he is good, and by loving what is all-good, we become in a great measure that which we contemplate, and thus prove God's handiwork—man, is not a failure.

I see many a leaden-eyed, supercilious lipp'd Priest, of many a sect, clinging to and feeding ghoul-like upon the dead body or wealth, of their churches, whilst the living, earnest, burning, spirit of their religion, has flown indignantly back to Heaven ! I see the MEEK white-robed Priest* (that he may still farther formalize his creed,) for the sake of burning a few wax altar candles yearly ;—wearing an overall of white, instead of black rag, and insisting upon his possession of a certain portion of the muddled stream of Apostolical Succession,—which has descended through a long filthy channel in very sooth,—give umbrage to his sequestering flock, and though he feeds not their spiritual wants, claims, unblushingly his temporal supply therefrom.—A fine illustration of the meekness and unselfishness of true Christianity !

I see the poor hollow-eyed child of Industry, looking anxiously around for “ the poor man's God,” to take pity on the helpless and despised, and seeing not His helping hand stretched forth, sinking into the abyss of Godless apathy, and God-defiance, till their overwhelming numbers shall rise and bear down all justice, law, and religion to destruction on the foaming crest of one wild wave of rebellion ! I see the famished work-worn widow and orphan toiling down the morning-star ;—whilst the vulgar heartless millionaire lights his lamp of luxury with their waning fire of life !

* Puseyite.

I see the religious hypocrite with a private leer don his sleek Sunday-suit of Religion,—gladly doff it on the evening of that defecrated day,—then lie and cheat royally, by word or deed, the other six. I see many of those who belong not to the vast sect of Cantists unearnest, heartless, and Godless; and those who do belong thereto, piously devoting those who despise their false-seeming and hypocrisy, to the tender care of the eternal flames of the damned. Over most of the so-called Religious World I see King Cant flaunting his tinsell'd and flaring banner;—or Indifference swinging opiates from her ebon censer, drowning all the latent aspirations of her votaries, and binding them to look at the dead letter, rather than the living spirit of their religious belief.

Yet in divers funny nooks do I see the true broad-soul'd men of God, haloed with good deeds, and with the beams of Hope falling from a bright Future upon their seer-like eyes, which they prophetically behold from their lofty altitudes, (even as Canaan fell on the eyes of Moses, standing on the peaked scalp of Pisgah). Yea, I also see *bands* of holy minded men, who LIVE as well as PROFESS religion, whose benevolent faces are filled with the radiant light of universal love, charity, and humility! Brightly do these funny spots shine from out the surrounding gloom!

I see the same Godlike expression glancing on the earnest upturned face, and broad brow of many a wildly aspiring youth, yearning for and gazing on the brilliant Era, now floating like the golden plume of some straying angel, down the vault of the glowing Future!—And to such from my ocean solitude I stretch forth the warm hand of Love; bid them God speed, and to weary not in well doing “for in due time they shall reap if they faint not!”

And why should ye faint, my brothers? Has not many a dark fiend who once ruled over, now been driven manacled with the curses of injured myriads from the Earth? Is not the bold brow of Truth more radiant,—less ensanguined, and is not her thorn-crown of Agony now removed to the sloping brows of Falsehood, Ignorance, and Hypocrisy? Can Priestcraft now extinguish the lamps of Science, and quench her daily increasing truths? Is the Noble now an oppressive, (law-permitted), feudal tyrant? Can the Monarch himself now tyrannize, torture, and provoke the wholesale murder of war at his “own sweet will?” Is not the ingenious, hard-palmed son of Industry, exalted far above the soft silky-handed son of slothful Ease? Have not the Nations of the World met to honour the ingenious artizan? Would they have done so to honour mere breath-created Nobility unless they likewise had performed some noble achievement? Can gold still out-balance (with the majority of men),—mental worth, and nobility of soul? Dare private Oppression lift her head when the Giant Press towers above, wielding his ponderous axe of Justice? Enter the crystal dome of that temple of Industry and universal brotherhood now standing,—learn there, the bright solution of many of these queries; and behold with delight the vast improvement and enlightenment now possessing the wide human world! Behold Peace sailing down the blue vault of the universal human mind, feathered with blessings, and the banished form of brutish War dwindling away into the land of Nothingness!

The grand Empire of Mind, with its fiery ministers of Justice, Love, Charity, and Universal Brotherhood, is fast founding, its foundations are laid already in the wide heart of mankind; and ere long its mighty walls of Love, its strong Towers of Justice,

and its glittering pinnacles of Aspiration shall enring the Earth, and pierce the sky!

Is this but a mirage? If ye have eyes to see look abroad and observe the signs of the Times; for as sure as God's Spirit threads, like thoughts of light, this vast Universe of whirling Worlds, and moulds their events aright, such things are, and shall be!

* * * * *

Again the dash of waves was heard, and the silver arrows of moonlight were seen by Julian entering through his open lattice; but still the visionary mood remained, and he insensibly found himself verging off into the misty realms of the Future.

Glimpses of the Future.

“And the World shall advance by the might of the youthful,
Till brightly it shines in the splendour Elysian.”—*Robert Hunt.*

LO! I stand in the lofty watch tower of the Present through the loopholes of which I catch faint glimpses of fight and sound, glancing, and roaring up through the mist veiling the wide ocean of the Future.

Hear I not floating up from those vague depths the holy matin birth-bell of a more earnest, tolerant, earth-embracing adaptation of the grand creed of Christianity, swelling also from the once idolatrous Orient?—Hear I not the deep curfew tones of the present clashing and contentious Religious Spirit? And through those misty folds catch I not faint glimpses of a more calm peace-

ful world? See I not the jagged masses of glacial formalism, and barren rocks of ceremonial rites, now blocking and choking up the proud-heaving stream of mind, so that no true earnest soul can sail calmly and unimpededly on to the blessed haven of Eternity,—torn up and whirling far adown the eddies and rapids of Oblivion into the dark Dead Sea of the Past?—And sunk in the abyssal depths of that silent sea how sleep the myriad corpses of once deified living creeds, forms, theories, ideas, and events?

King Form, though not so hale as of yore, still sits his throne, and still do the myriads pay tribute and adore. But see I not the bleared eyes of old age,—the quivering voice,—the faltering hand upon him, and the infant glance of mutiny in the eyes of many? Instead of his old ministers Materialism and Sensualism, with their train of materialized beliefs, see I not the lusty youth Spiritualism with heavenly fire, and virtuous indignation in his eye proudly and unbendingly surveying the old dotard who usurped his birth-right, and ere long will he not gently but firmly remove the usurper? Is he not quietly at work with many a vigorous youthful mind? And shall the tyranny of Opinion always choke the utterance of nobly earnest, and aspiring souls? No! already have they stepp'd out from the old ranks, and with a stout yet humble and loving heart do I here also pledge myself to fight to the death under their banner against the fiends Hate, Scorn, Opinion, Intolerance, and Priestly domination, whilst the true naked essence and the essence alone of Christianity in its widest sense, shall fill our minds with valour to fight the good fight of advancing Truth, and Love. We claim the immunities of mind and insight as well as Priests! We wish to fall prostrate to the Will of God, but not of his unearnest and dogmatical MINISTERS—often falsely

so called. We wish each heart to become a holy temple dedicate to God, its foundations rooted in, and *not* dismembered from, Nature and Humanity, but its pinnacles striking heavenwards!—Each soul its own spiritual interpreter, if it be so minded! Each man his own Priest, and his family his flock! We wish for less garish outside religion, and more inward; that the religion of seven days shall not be done in one dense unleavened lump on the seventh. We despise the claim of Apostolical Succession and insight claim'd chiefly by the least religious and most proud Priests! We claim for ourselves (with the blessing of God) as deep a seership,—as clear a judgment,—and a far deeper earnestness in spiritual matters than the majority of them! Nor will we be devoted with a sanctimonious sigh to eternal damnation, for daring to disseminate our own views on spiritual matters; for scorning their unworthiness; and for presuming to slit the skirts of their long-flowing robe of Pride! A new Era is floating down the vault of Futurity over the Earth, and even now its golden fringe, gilt by the dawning Sun of Truth and Freedom touches the Universal human mind, and thrills it with refreshful youthfulness, and expectancy. Many think the Millennium even at the door. This event will be when Christianity shall be acted, instead of spoken, and this event must soon be, or the word Christian shall become an epithet of reproach, which may God through the medium of earnest souls prevent!

From the land of Heaven I see many a noble bark floating adown the swelling stream of the Future, freighted with nobly earnest minds broad-brow'd and open-soul'd, and these are they, who with the sharp axe of Truth shall fell many a shadowing and injurious forest of rank Opinion, with its briery undergrowth of

lacerating bigotry and intolerance, where reptile passions are harboured and unmolestedly dwell.

Fear not, my brothers, that Priestcraft, whether Popish or otherwise, shall ever again wave her bloody standard over the nations ! The Gates of Mind, thanks to the philanthropic advances of popular education, are now flung open to myriads, who would crush her tyrant head dare she again raise her oppressive hand as of yore ! Rather fear lest Infidelity and Atheism stamp the mark of the Beast on the brows of myriads, since the indifferentism and avarice of those who call themselves the ministers of the living God, have unhinged the confiding belief of their innocent childhood.

I see the age of Apathy, Cant, and Intolerance, rolled away like a black scroll into the archives of Eternity there to rest till removed by the hand of the recording Angel and read before the judgment seat of God. But I see also living streams of light and love flowing down from Heaven through the electric chains of earnest man-loving souls, flooding the Earth with holy beauty, charity and universal kindliness.

And lo ! the Poet's soul is such electric chain, and high on the loftiest peaks of the Future, I see him stand crowned by his fellow-men with the glittering coronet of esteem ; engarlanded with flowers of love, culled from the sunny slopes of innocent hearts and aspiring souls ; his pen his sceptre and sword of Justice ;—mankind his supporters ; and he aiming to be but the spiritual interpreter, and high priest, in the Natural Temple of his loving, and beloved God !

The visionary clouds fled away, and again Julian heard the

measured dash of the slowly heaving waves filling his dark study. His fire was low, his pulse sluggish, but his heart was glad. The sick beams of twilight faltered into the dark-curtained recesses of his room :—the moon lay fainting before the dawn of a brighter luminary—like this age shall do before the dawning Sun of the Future,—and coldly calm the earth and sea stretched broadly around.

In the east lay the folded clouds piled on the heaving floor of the sea ; cold, dead, and moveless they stood,—like the lifeless forms of present creeds, ere the re-dawning sun of Earnestness touch them into life and golden beauty ;—faintly, but increasingly flew up thin shafts of faint saffron to the zenith ;—the saffron deepened into gold ;—the earth grew radiantly beautiful ;—the dead clouds grew bright with laughing gold,—then filled with intense lustral life :—they lifted slightly, and at length between the rift of cloud and ocean, up floated the broad globe of the glorious Sun shooting a quiver of brilliant arrows along the sea—amongst the o'er-canopying clouds—over the cliffs—upon the simple cots and greensward—and into Julian's adoring soul,—who inwardly felt that did he not worship a spiritual Sun of Glory,—this outward symbol of God, so instinct with life, light, and blessings, should see him like an oriental devotee, on his knees, a loving and adoring worshipper !

Thus ended one of Julian's vigils, which enlarged his mind, filled his soul with solemnity, and a strange feeling of Eternity, and gave him a distaste to the small cares and follies of the World, which he had long ago sailed past on his path o'er the waters of Life. Such nights could not fail to make him visionary, enthusiastic, and prematurely grave, all of which they had accomplish'd most regally.

During succeeding vigils in divers scenes,—for his mind was ever a worshipping in the solemn Temple of Night,—various stray thoughts bearing on the subject of the present work, fell at intervals like leaves from his growing tree of Wisdom, which, as they dropped without order, shall here follow even as they fell ;—some perchance green and permeated with the refreshing sap of Truth, others perhaps prematurely autumnal, or destitute of moisture from their birth.

TIME is the Sexton of the grand Cathedral of Life, who tolls the knell of dead Eras, buries them in the grave-yard of the Past, but registers in his massive chronicle, the birth, life, and death of all short-lived passing Events ;—which chronicle he will yield on his death-bed, in the last day of the reign of Matter, (when his Temple shall be also overthrown) ; into his Creator's hands, to be deposited in the Archives of Eternity, and the crash of the material universe shall be his curfew, when its sheath, or lifeless body, falls away from the gleaming Spirit which resided within its case or crust.

THE thoughts of a great Poet or original Thinker, like mountain torrents, sink first through the highest talented minds, and gradually lapse therethrough, till they sweep adown, gathering fullness and force as they go, and pour through and fertilize the broad valleys of humanity where their rich beneficial effects are chiefly and more extensively visible. So with the once thin streamlet of Christianity ; and so, with all great teachings since Time began. So also with each individual mind, which is a minute representative, in its spiritual wanderings, backslidings, and aspirations, of The Ages of the World.

TO speak effectually to spirits cooped in matter, surrounded by material agencies,—a material Universe, and unacquainted with spiritual existence,—spiritual meanings and revelations must be encased in material symbols or imagery, even as “The Word” ere it could speak effectually to mankind took flesh and dwelt among them. A Truth floating down from Heaven to Earth, then, to pass intelligibly through, and become standard knowledge in the human mind universal, must take a material clothing, or become as it were the inner soul dwelling within an outer simile, ere it can be visible and intelligible to the mind of man, for as we have said elsewhere,

“Matter knows not Spirit’s form.”

Some thinkers use imagery merely to clothe their abstract ideas after evolving them from the depths of thought. First arises from the Paradise of meditation the naked idea, and then seeing it to be naked, and oftentimes imperfect, the fig-leaves of imagery are thrown over it to give it a fairer show, or to attract the eye of the reader with its fanciful dress, and thus pass it more pleasantly into his mind.

Others, more earnest and natural Poets, (for every writer who clothes great truths with eloquent language *is* a true Poet), look upon the thousand lovely or grand forms of Nature with a loving eye, until a living spiritual meaning springs out of the inanimate symbol, and this is the grand language of Nature where the thought,—like fragrance oozes out of the form.

The first is the thought of man arraying itself in the imagery of God’s creation to give it grandeur and extrinsic charm ;—the latter is the thought of God residing in Nature and breaking

through its form or symbol-shell into self-utterance to some deeply attentive soul.

One, is the thought of man arrayed in bright garments from the wardrobe of the Eternal,—the other, is the meaning of God speaking in his own language, through the forms of his own creation, to the universal mind of his also created children. The first is thought clothed loosely with extrinsic imagery:—the second is imagery containing the thought, which like the pith in the core has grown up with the tree. In fine, the first is the coronal of culled orange blossoms adorning the brow of some fair thought;—the second, is the orange-tree itself engemm'd with its own living fragrant blooms. One is an adventitious ornament, the other is natural and self-contained beauty!

Hence all true Poets have ever loved, and will ever love the majestic solitudes of Nature. The companionship of the ocean,—of solemn forests,—of aspiring mountains,—rushing rivers,—gushing streamlets,—murmurous fountains;—sunset, twilight, moonlight, starlight, and the silent watches of midnight, crowned with the golden coronet of recreating morn! Then, not only do they find noble imagery in the gorgeous wardrobe of the Universe in which to array their abstract and thought-evolved ideas, but out of those glorious natural phases and scenes shall thoughts themselves break their symbolic material shells, and truths which lay like torpid souls within for an Eternity, shall take wing into the ether-realms of mind, and enrich man's treasury of wisdom!

As the Egyptian hieroglyphs are still visibly existing but the key lost, even so are the mystic hieroglyphics of Nature. Man, the fallen, has lost the key, and forgot even that it is a symbolic language at all. This key God now lends but at intervals, to

burningly earnest souls, who in fits of intense aspiration, which raise them into the realms of inspiration, see Nature as it were glorified and swarming with unmanacled meanings.

Yet that these Egyptian ciphers do contain meaning, though now unknown, who doubts? Or who looking on the varied countenance of nature can believe that her various expressions, are but chance-begot? I have heard that the Enthusiast gazed deeply on those grotesque ciphers of the defunct Egyptian Priesthood, till gradually their meaning dawned over his soul, and the secrets of the birth of Time unfolded! So likewise will I gaze on the mightier and more solemn characters of Nature, till like the Divine hand-writing on Belfhazzer's palace wall the awful characters become luminous, and prove themselves written by the finger of the Eternal.

THE lesson I gather from all religious teachings is this,—that the chief victory is obtained, when we see God in all things, moving throughout and beneath external created things which we call Nature,—and that it is his hand guiding the rushing chariot of events which he will surely drive safely on to some blessed goal!—When we feel that he is *not* a Great Spirit in some far off abstract and unknown region, calmly perusing the every day page of life;—*not* like one of the gods of whom the benighted “Epicurean” speaks in the following lines,

—“As if, blest
And blooming in their own blue skies,
The eternal gods were not too wise
To let weak man disturb their rest!”

(Moore.)

but one who is ever anxiously promoting the universal good of all created existences, whether mortal or immortal, that he is within and around all, and that his spirit is the thread on which all events as well as things are strung. To this ennobling belief is naturally added, the earnest wish to merge creature will into the Creator's will, and the desire to become a self-passive, but delighted atom of the vast machine, in which God weaves the grand web of final happiness and bliss, in which to envelope the shivering body of the as yet aching, and miserable Universe. In fine, not to oppose self-will wall-wise to the onward march of God's Designs, but to throw it down as a plank o'er which they may march on to the goal of completion !

OFTEN when deeply contemplating the silent company of vast congregated mountains, have I thought,—for what reason stand they there so huge, dead and immovable ? How vast an expenditure of creative power apparently to so little purpose !—for whilst one alone would outweigh all the men earth ever saw or will see, yet has even an idiot more vital power and self-command within his own poor narrow brain ! Did God but touch them into life, what swarms of self-created, self-motive beings would they sink down into and swarm with ! Why stand ye so silent ? What mean ye ? Are ye but the records of some horrible convulsion, when the crash of the ponderous world rushed in a hurricane of awfully ruinous sound through the depths of space, and shook the golden stars like Autumnal fruit ? Or are ye the eternal monuments piled on some vast pre-Adamite Sodom, whose name and existence are unknown ? Perchance ye were the natural strongholds of a mightier race than the mannikins now strutting heedlessly over the world's grand features !

Are they not meant for the soul of man to behold with awe and adoration the power without him which is far mightier than he? Were there no huge mountains, oceans, storms, forests, cataracts, in the world,—or vast systems of Suns with their separate revolving planetary systems crowding and shoaling within unfathomable Space—would man then feel so greatly the majesty of his God? Is not Adoration ever a kneeling devotee in the vast Temple of the Marvellous and Sublime? Do not Love and Veneration often fly in through the gates of Awe? Would our idea of God be so great were the World levelled and macadamized down to the vast plain which Utilitarianism would wish to walk easily over?—And would existence be bearable to a noble soul without some mightily good and great Power to reverence, and to whom it could pay the delightful homage of reverential Love? The World without aspirations of which mountains with their cloud-piercing brows are the natural symbols would become a wide level den of snarling shop-keepers, sharpers, and gold-gluttons or misers, and from being a denizen in such a World,—“ Good Lord, deliver me !”

No ! I for one glory in ye, O eternal and heaven pointing mountains ! When I scale your lofty scalps,—over your thick mantles of bright cerulean heather, as though the sky had fallen into those countless bells of loving blue,—and gaze up into the heavens above, down upon the earth beneath, around upon your vast and sublimely piled ranges, like huge waves of solid matter, flowing regularly on from the far misty distance, with what bounding salient delight, rushes out my soul to embrace the grand works of my blessed Creator, and throw itself in a bursting ecstasy of love at his footstool, who in creating a world for his children,

studied not alone their paltry material wants, and then stopp'd his hand, but gave them grandeur and beauty with the liberal hand of a fatherly God, wherewith to nourish and cheer their souls on, to like great and beautiful actions!

Blessed be God for the Mountains! They stand majestically noble and unpolluted by the defecrating handiworks of Man! The broad palm of God lies on their adoring and aspiring brows! They are the natural watch towers of Religion and Solitude, their very atmosphere is poison to small worldly cares and vanities,—and ever when a spiritual reviver, who brings fresh life into a decaying creed appears, must he first like the holy man-God Christ, retire to the mountains alone to pray; for there shall his soul be purified, strengthened, enlarged, and sublimed for the coming conflict with mankind;—the leathern-winged bat of small human Ambition, cannot scale those heights; the strong eagle eye and wing of faith alone reigns upon their lofty solitudes of thought, and when such teacher appears filled with vast Contemplations, and with mighty imagery awaiting to clothe his great thoughts, he shall “speak with power, and authority, and not as the scribes!”

May the blessing of all aspiring souls rest on their noble heads! I for one pour a heartfull of thanksgiving over their huge altars, yea,

“I bless them, and they SHALL be blest!”

SINCE I first entered the sombrous avenues of contemplation, often has a dark bat-like thought wheeled through the gloom, now disappearing in the distance, but ever returning with more troublesome motions. Did God really know the poor beings he created would by myriads be doomed to eternal punishment with-

out any ultimate benefit or release from such dire endurance? Are we not compelled to admit, that either His attribute of Omniscience is imaginary, if we believe him to be a loving and a pitying God?—That the ministry of Evil is but a bridge to future good, and cementer and delineator of Good by its dread contrast thereto;—that the dark Evil Power is co-equal with the Good, as light with darkness, and battles for empire therewith, the human heart being the tilting ground,—even as believed by the deep Oriental thinkers of old? Or that God's scheme in creating such as he knew notwithstanding all offers of salvation would refuse it and be damned eternally (as Calvinists believe the case to be) was a cruel and ungodlike one? Think of a burning hell-universe, crammed with agonized and countless myriads of tortured souls, rolling luridly onwards for ever through the depths of Eternity, whilst a heavenly world sails anear on wings of light and joy. Could God feel blest, if he be sole Creator, whilst this proof of the sad imperfection of his creation lay ever beneath his eye. Had not God created mankind, would this eternal misery have ever existed?

And the thought, that as the Angels could, yea, *did* fall from Heaven to Hell;—so, reversing the idea, might not a beam of light strike even from Hell to Heaven from souls who through the agonizing deserts of repentance, self-contempt, and annihilation of self-will, sought their Father, whose arms were ever held open to receive his poor repentant prodigals? To allow that Angels were admitted to fall, but fallen souls not admitted to rise, seems as though the Deity revell'd in the misery of those he had “of his own free-will begat.”

Such is the sphinx-question ever rising to confront me boldly,

and which I feel bound to answer or perish, whereas it appears an absolute necessity that the ideal I form of God should be mightily, grandly good, loving, pitying and noble, ere I bend my knee in worship. Pity is the flower of greatness; Love is the root of majesty!

I give publicity to this thought from good but private motives. I believe it to be of greater benefit to mankind to interest themselves on these noble queries, than on the myriad small questions on temporal matters now choking up nearly all the avenues of thought. And when crowds of writers have taken so dark and brutal a view of the eternal punishment of poor small-soul'd wretches, and Dante and Pollok especially seem to gloat over with such fiendish gusto the never ending agonies of the damned, the question above alluded to forces itself upon the mind. The terrors of Hell more than the fatherly love of God have been too much paraded, and every small preacher I have heard throwing his mite of hate and vengeance at the damned, till my soul has sickened with disgust.

Friends may chide and strangers abuse my name for speaking so boldly, but here let me tell all such, that more than friends, or home, or country, or life, or even love itself, do I prize the truthfulness, honesty, and manliness in which I lay my sentiments boldly,—despite or spite,—before the world! As long as I have a God, and a conscience, to reward me for my unseen motives, shall I be plenteously rewarded and content!

EVERY perfectly developed mind is a little Universe or Cosmos in itself. It is variegated by streams limpid or turbid,—either of love or hate,—it has its peaceful valleys of rest and ease,

—its craggy pinnacled mountains of aspiration enwreathed by the clouds of mystic adoration,—its tidal ocean of resolve and irresolve,—its dark deep gulfs of fantasy and speculation,—its sun and shade chequered land of memory,—its barren desert of scepticism, and its firmament of religious feeling, wherein bright hopeful thoughts are stars. It has also its central, last-reached Eden of rest and simple beauty ; herein man learns the truth, that innocence is the highest and last attained peak of grandeur ; that confiding, childlike trust in God is the true secret of power and happiness, and that to annihilate or sink his own will into that of his Creator's does not make him a mere cipher in creation, but a trebly powerful instrument in working brightly out the problem of Good or Evil, for which solution the material Universe was shot into existence.

This absorption of human into the Divine Will, is the trunk and branches of the Tree of Life, flourishing in the centre of such garden, and sects, creeds, and dogmas are but the yearly leaves shooting out of its branches, and which then wither and fall.

The human mind is a small internal duplicate of the external Universe !—The innate, convex and negative spirit-drop, reflecting the grand external and positive face of nature, which book of nature is open to, and read by every clay-cooped soul ;—which when it has left its impress on and moulded the total sum of human minds, (such impressions being intended to be used, explained, and understood, in a future state of existence), shall be rolled away into annihilation by its Creator.

I QUOTE from a recent advertisement list on the wrapper of a noted Literary Journal.

“To the Clergy.—A Clergyman of long standing, moderate views, and considerable experience, will furnish ORIGINAL SERMONS on the leading doctrines of the Gospel, written in a legible hand for 1l. 5s. each.” &c.

How must the noble souled editor of such journal have blushed for the so-called ministers of the living God, when he saw the burning shame stamped upon his wrapper! Have I said too much about Church-Mammonism, or Church-uneasiness? To the seller and purchaser of such poached sermons, let me tell them that the true burning spirit of Christianity cannot be in them! I had written a fierce paragraph upon this advertisement, but I have thought it better to leave it alone in its own shameful deformity.

I am happy to observe that in Ireland, where I am now writing, the fire of earnestness burns brightly, in the upright soul of many a true minister of God, and that Mammon is not worshipped here as in England.

AND now ere concluding, let me give vent to one word of gratitude to the reigning powers. I fear not the charge of fervility by any who have perused my book, and seen my spirit reflected therein,—for it appeals not to potentates as such,—but to the broad heart of humanity.

Our constitution, with the monarch at its head, has been universally admitted as the best and firmest grounded in the World, and rightly so. A material and political ruler is almost as necessary to our happiness, and advancement, in temporal matters, as a Spiritual King is to the advancement and contentment of our souls, and is a type of the latter.

I abhor, and would shed my blood against the cruel domination of tyrants, crowds of whom have sat the ensanguined thrones of a hundred kingdoms. But when a good and virtuous monarch sways the sword of Justice righteously,—sets a nobly moral and virtuous example; so that virtue instead of vice (as formerly), becomes even the fashion,—deeply interests herself in their welfare,—crowns Industry with honour and well-earned praise;—encourages science, learning, arts and literature,—and at the same time remembers that these latter are not the roots, but the flower of a nation's greatness, then am I proud to call myself a subject, and to bend with reverential love to her sceptre.

Such a Monarch now sits our ancient throne; her Consort has plucked the fruit of eternal and blessed fame from the Tree of Peace and Industry which flourishes only in the garden of God.—They have called forth the latent energies and genius of the Nations,—not to adorn a gaudy useless “Field of the Cloth of Gold,”—but to assemble them peacefully under the crystal dome of a vast Palace of Industry and mechanical genius, and the blessings and eulogies of many a century yet unborn shall rest on their united heads, when we hope the coronets of Heaven shall have displaced those of Earth! I ask whether such signs are not bright omens of the good coming times, when Peace and Universal Brotherhood shall cover the earth like the radiant light-vest of a brilliant morning?

Many legal abuses still exist, and many hard laws have yet to be softened and remoulded by the snowy hand of equitable Justice. The diablerie of that dark fearful hell-pit of Chancery; the greedy shares of church-wealth allotted to many of the least worthy, whilst the poor, honourable and sensitive Curate starves; the al-

low'ing a greedy and vulgar-minded millionaire to thrive upon the life blood of his poor workmen and women, and other such abuses have to be swept into annihilation. The Monarch is not to blame for these, but the statesmen who moulded unrighteous laws, or permit petty tyranny; and to judge righteously, let us admit from actions already before us, that her arm would be the first to shake such rotten fruit from the branches which they disgrace.

All things prophesy a bright Spring, and resurrection from wintry cares and oppressions! Let us then look joyfully onwards, each one throwing his mite into the universal treasury of generous actions and aspirations,—then shall a moral Paradise yet float down from heaven o'er this lovely World, which the evil passions, prejudices, and tyranny of men, have hitherto rendered so barren and sterile. Let us thank God for all his profuse but undeserved blessings;—try to deserve more;—be more charitable to each other;—lenient to failings where compatible with the general good, respectful to each other's opinions, and hopeful in the budding prospects of the Future,

For the sunshine aye shall light the sky,
As round and round we run;
And the truth shall ever come uppermost,
And justice shall be done.—*Mackay.*

Self Criticism.

MY roving little book is finished. Critics may censure the absence of Art in its composition, but I know some of them will kindly hail its truthful narration, the impress of its Author's heart and mind, stamped on its every page, and its disre-

gard to the “rusty, musty, fusty, crusty,” laws of bookmaking, where brain-machinery is alone visible and the real living heart of the author is nowhere seen, as the thread on which his utterances are strung.

By those who cannot discern the difference between earnestness and vanity, I shall doubtless be thought a gigantic Egotist; by those who are enthusiastic and impulsive like myself, I fear it not.

I have sprinkled my book with star-similes till it somewhat resembles a galaxy. They ever afforded me boundless delight; how then could I shut out the mild light of their fine imagery from my book, when they seem already a part of my soul? Let those who blame turn their spleen against my dear old preceptor, who endeavoured so kindly to teach me those beauties scientifically, which I loved so naturally, for which may blessings as plentiful as my star-similes fall upon his noble head! Perhaps the day may yet dawn, when God will enable me to strike a few quivering notes of mystic meaning from their strings of light!

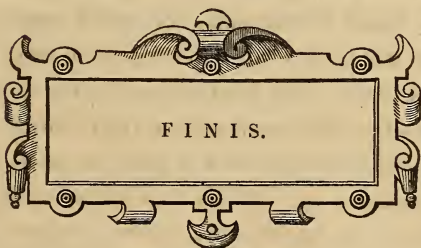
The wild enthusiasm of the book I glory in; *that*, I fear, is its only recommendation; and I think it an honour to shout out my sentiments boldly in an Age which is looking for brave hearts and bold tongues, to voice forth its whispered sentiments, but seldom finds. Yea, could I but set the cold hearts of three parts of the human family a-blaze with noble enthusiasm, and thaw the huge glaciers of selfishness I would speak in words of fire!

Several Spirits of Light hover o’er its pages. A deep child-like love of God and desire to see his love *acknowledged*, even as it is displayed in all things. Its hatred to Cant, hypocrisy and intolerance; and its general heartiness of tone and purpose. That these are its characteristics none can deny;—which, kindly con-

sidered, I fear not that critics will treat its many faults and shortcomings harshly, or the World with neglect ; for right well must they perceive that its author speaks from his heart, and that heart is filled with love to God and Man !

Loch Guitane.

September, 1851.



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EXCERPTS

OF THE WORKS OF THE

A
The first of these is the "History of the
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It is written in a clear and concise
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Owing to the attack given below, and this being my FIRST work, I have taken the liberty of quoting the following opposing opinions, which otherwise I would not have done. A.

EXCELSIOR ; OR, THE REALMS OF POESY.

“ A VOLUME of miscellanies comprising reflections on the Poets, criticisms indicating their characteristics, and freely investigating their faults as well as their excellences, essays and narratives, written with singular elegance, and obviously the productions of a refined as well as of a reflecting intellect. The author’s sympathies are always with the truthful, the fearless, and the generous, and few rise from the perusal of this little volume without having profited by it—with mind enlarged and sympathies extended. If the author is young, there is so much of promise in this first effort that we shall hope some day to welcome him to a high place in the literature of the age.”

The Critic :—London Literary Journal.

“ Your glowing, murmuring, meandering, earnest little book.”

Gilfillan.

“ Your very pleasing and elegantly written little volume. With most of the critical opinions expressed in it, I fully concur.

P. J. Bailey. (Festus.)

“ Your beautiful little book, full of high thoughts.”—*Robert Hunt.*

“ This book seems to have been printed for private circulation rather than for general publication, whence it happens that only the printer’s name appears to the title, in addition to the pseudonym of the author, whose real name, however (I. Orton, to wit), closes the introductory notice, which is dated from St. Margaret’s Bay. In this we detect at once much carelessness and immaturity of style. But let us, nevertheless, turn to the poetical disquisition which forms the substantive ar-

gument of the work itself. Here the juvenile Alastor makes much account, and rightly, of the spirit of Love, as the only true inspiration for the genuine poet. He likewise treats us with a 'definition' of poetry; as thus:—"Poesy is the lightning-chain 'twixt heaven and earth; it elevates the real into the ideal, and annihilates the cold, false, and dead laws of materialism;" a definition which may be said to defy criticism—succeeded by other definitions of the different professors of poetry, from Shakespeare to Byron, which may be pronounced to be similarly qualified. We have then certain rhapsodies on Byron, Keats, and Shelley; followed by others on Tennyson, Bailey, Atherstone, Kent, (of whom we know nothing), Longfellow, Emerson, Willis, Leigh Hunt, Lamartine, Cook, Mackay, Bulwer, Dickens, and Robert Hunt. Verily, there is in Mr. Orton a wild enthusiasm, but as chaotic as could be wished. Need is that thereupon should be induced shape and form. Besides the poets above named, in subsequent chapters we have certain ravings on a score or two others, succeeded by certain metaphysical speculations on time and matter, not, however, sufficiently intelligible to permit of analysis or citation."

Illustrated London News.

"A book which I take to be the intellectual blossom of your youth, a blossom prefaging the golden fruits of poetry and passion."

W. C. M. Kent.

"I am glad to see you have so well and warmly advocated the cause of poetry. I have no doubt from the spirit you have displayed,—that the title of the book will be the watch-word of your own guidance in life and in literature."

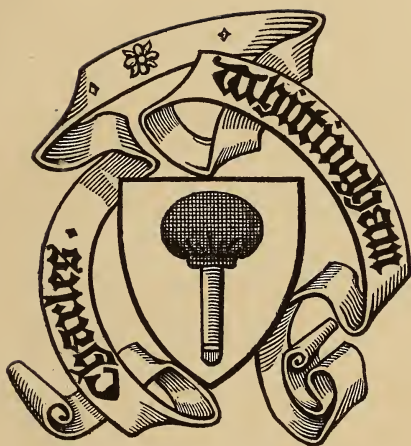
Charles Mackay.

"Your elegant and exciting work * * * I have already seen some splendid ideas, expressed in strong language. I expect a great intellectual feast in perusing it."

Bosworth. (Dr. Ang. Sax. Dict. &c.)

"I have been much pleased by the evident enthusiasm, with which you regard Poetry and Poets. * * * Your liberal remarks on Shelley have much pleased me."

Atherstone.



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